IPI workers wait for final paycheck. PAGE 2
Over 500 families get temporary shelters. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

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BACK TO GUAM
Col. Travis Delk, Joint Task Group - Saipan commander, thanks members of the Army Reserves for their hard work during relief efforts for Super Typhoon Yutu at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on Nov. 28, 2018, prior to the soldiers boarding a C-130J Super Hercules for redeployment back to Guam.
U.S. AIR FORCE/TECH. SGT. JOSHUA J. GARCIA

Atalig, GF indicted on 5 charges

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The U.S. government filed a superseding indictment yesterday in federal court charging Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig and his girlfriend, Evelyn Atalig, with five corruption charges for allegedly arranging CNMI government-funded trips to California, Palau, Guam, and Saipan under fraudulent pretenses.

» Two allegedly arranged govt-funded trips to California, Palau, Guam, Saipan

The superseding indictment charged Mayor Atalig and Evelyn Atalig with conspiracy, wire fraud, theft from program receiving federal funds, and two counts of false statements.

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Est. damage to CUC's power on Saipan, Tinian at $17.3M

» Repair at Saipan's water, wastewater costs $626,075 as of Oct. 26
» 50 pct. of Saipan have power; CUC's target 100 pct. power on Tinian before Christmas

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s preliminary assessment places the cost of the damage to the power systems on Saipan and Tinian at $17.3 million, while the

See DAMAGE on Page 4

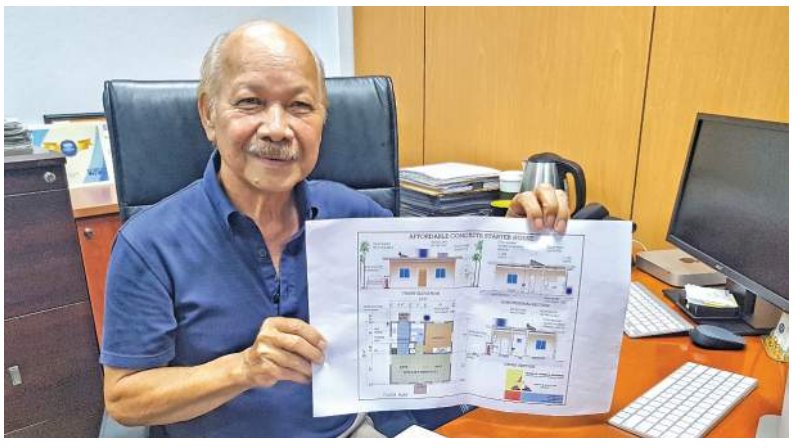
NMI architect promotes typhoon-proof homes

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

It has been 36 days since Super Typhoon Yutu hit the CNMI. Half of Saipan and the entire island of Tinian is still struggling to pick up the pieces.

The sight of so many destroyed buildings and scattered debris from roofless houses prompted architect Herman B. Cabrera to go to his drafting table, examine the elements of

See ARCHITECT on Page 4



Architect Herman B. Cabrera, a seasoned architect, has seen many strong storms go through the CNMI and Guam. "The 'affordable concrete starter house' is designed based on those experiences. ...I don't want to see the CNMI in rubble after every typhoon and something must be done." he said. BEA CABRERA

Search for missing diver called off

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The search for 65-year-old John J. Jones has been called off; he remains missing.

According to Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero, the search for Jones was called off 72 hours after the launch of a search for him at the Grotto and surrounding areas.

DPS, along with the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services and the DPS Boating Safety, started the search on Sunday, Nov. 18.

It's standard DPS procedure to call

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INSIDE

ASIA
Black box data show Lion Air pilots struggled to maintain control of a Boeing jet.
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WORLD
Mexico signals it would be willing to house the migrants while they apply for U.S. asylum.
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ENVIRONMENT
A landmark U.S. climate change study brings greater urgency to what Americans can do.
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SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

IPI workers wait for final paycheck

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Most of the laid-off employees of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC are scheduled to leave Saipan today but they have yet to received their final paycheck, which was supposed to be given two days before their flight.

Representatives of the employees told Saipan Tribune that they have already received their plane tickets but IPI's human resources has yet to coordinate their last paychecks with them.

The company's human resources department was given the task to issue the one-day flight notice and to answer and handle all questions and other inquiries of the employees.

"But there's no coordination yet with HR. Those who are schedule to leave [Thursday] have yet to get their final paycheck. There's one of us who resigned, left Saipan last week, and he did not receive his last paycheck," said one of the workers.

"Are they going to send it to us when we're already back in the Philippines? We asked IPI to also release our paychecks when we're get our flight itinerary. They first gave us our return tickets for our Nov. 29 flight but no paycheck."

They said that IPI chair Mark Brown, who returned to lead the company last month, wanted to know how many would be leaving the island and how many would want to stay to look for another job.

"He [Brown] wanted to know the exact number of employees who would want to leave Saipan since it would be a waste of money if IPI would book 200 return tickets but only half would avail of it," the employee added.

"The names of those who would want to stay should submit their names to human resources so IPI would no longer spend for a plane ticket that will not be used. We asked if the plane ticket could be converted to cash, but Mr. Brown said it would be subject for approval by management."

IPI, which was permitted by the CNMI Department of Labor to lay off its workers after informing them, would shoulder the airfare of the employees the same way when they were hired by the company in the Philippines. The employees would also be flown back at company expense.

The employees are also allowed to have two luggage for their return flight, the same way when they were brought to Saipan.

NMC's fall semester resumes Dec. 3 for afternoon, Saturday classes

Northern Marianas College will be resuming its fall 2018 afternoon, evening, and Saturday classes on Dec. 3, 2018, at the Saipan Southern High School. The calendar for the remainder of the semester follows:

- Instructional weeks: Dec. 3 – 15, 2018
- Holiday break: Dec. 17, 2018 – Jan. 5, 2019
- Instructional weeks: Jan. 7, 2019 – Feb. 2, 2019
- Final exam week: Feb. 4-9, 2019

Fall 2018 semester dates for morning, online, hybrid, and selected afternoon classes (Monday – Saturday):

The dates for the continuation of the fall 2018 morning (or "AM"), online, hybrid, and selected PM classes will resume as follows (location will be announced later):

- First week of instruction: Jan. 7 – 12, 2019
- Last week of instruction: Jan. 28, 2019 – Feb. 2, 2019
- Final Exam Week: Feb. 4- 9, 2019

Adjusted spring 2019 semester dates (Monday – Saturday):

First week of instruction: Feb. 18-23, 2019

Spring break: April 15 – 20, 2019

Last week of instruction: May 27, 2019 – June 1, 2019

Final exam week: June 3-8, 2019

These dates, including the start date for the fall 2018 semester, may change due to unanticipated events or factors. NMC will announce any changes through email, website, social media, and other news outlets.

NMC staff members will be at Saipan Southern High School on Dec. 3, 2018, to provide support and assistance to students as they return back for the remainder of the fall 2018 semester. For more information call the NMC hotline number at 285-7651 or 285-2059 or visit www.marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

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Centering Pregnancy Location: WIC Clinic, Navy Hill Saipan • Contact Information: CHCC Maternal & Child Health Program

Number of break-ins heighten a month after Yutu

The Saipan community has been seeing an increasing number of break-ins, a month after Super Typhoon Yutu. With much of the CNMI still in complete darkness, this has given thieves the opportunity to break into homes, establishments, and damaged offices.

Public Safety Commissioner Robert Guerrero confirmed that there have been burglaries and break-ins reported and DPS officers have made arrests. Guerrero said more information will follow.

The Guma Sakman, home to the 500 Sails non-profit organization and the Dolphin Club, is a victim to an attempted burglary last weekend.

According to April Repeki, a Dolphin Club swimming instructor, she noticed signs of an attempted burglary last Saturday when she went to the Guma Sakman to get the kickboards stored there.

Repeki said that the first sign was an open door and, after taking a photo of the scene, she noticed signs that the doors had been forced open.

"The back door was open and I was thinking that maybe it was just the security guard because he has a key to the back door…but when I took a picture of it, that's when I noticed that the door lock was picked and it was actually broken and the knob was almost completely gone, so I knew that it wasn't the security guard and it was actually a break-in but there was nothing missing….I then noticed the door that connects the restroom to the office seemed to [have been] forced…in but they couldn't make it into the main office," she said.

Repeki said she did not call the police to report the incident since there was nothing taken and it seemed too late to report the incident.

Emma Perez, 500 Sails president, said that, although nothing was taken from the Guma Sakman, she is asking the community to help them watch over the building as its meant to serve the community.

"Please help us keep an eye on it. It's a non-profit and there is nothing of value at the Guma Sakman except for [the traditional canoe] Neni. We have relocated all our stuff… it's just a place for the community and the kids to learn how to swim and for people to learn how to sail," she said.

Perez said it's just saddening that there are people out there breaking into the Guma Sakman when its staff can't physically be there as they are offering swimming lessons to children in shelters.

"We're not there because we're teaching shelter kids how to swim and there are people trying to break in," she said.

Aside from the Guma Sakman, there have been unofficial reports all over social media warning the CNMI community to be vigilant as there are individuals breaking into homes and attempting to steal items such as generators.

There have also been unofficial reports that there are individuals breaking into damaged homes and taking photos so they could claim losses with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. ***(Kimberly A. Bautista)***

Over 500 families get temporary shelters

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The government's temporary shelter program has already provided tents to over 500 families who lost their homes following Super Typhoon Yutu.

As of last Saturday, 586 families were provided tents that would serve as a temporary shelter until their homes are restored, according to Homeland Security Emergency Management Office spokesperson Nadine Deleon Guerrero.

She said more tents under the Temporary Emergency Tent and Roofing Installation Support program are being erected.

Individuals who lost their homes through Yutu who are interested in applying for the program are encouraged to sign up before Dec. 8.

The newly created Temporary Emergency Tent and Roofing Installation Support program, or TETRIS, is prioritizing homes that sustained major damage or were completely leveled by Super Typhoon Yutu.

The TETRIS program, which is a collaboration between the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the CNMI government, aims to help storm-impacted residents returning to or remaining in their homes while permanent repairs are being completed.

According to Deleon Guerrero, assessments are still underway and homes that were completely damage or sustained major damage are being prioritized.

With the huge demand for tents, individuals who are in dire need of temporary homes will be prioritized.

There is still no numbers on the roofing program under TETRIS. The deadline to apply for the roofing program is also Dec. 8.

PSS sets new re-opening dates

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

The Public School System has extended a week beyond the initial date for the resumption of classes of some schools as some campuses face massive damage.

The PSS announced late afternoon yesterday that nine schools would resume classes one week after Dec. 3, while other schools will open on that date.

The Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School, Kagman Elementary School, San Vicente Elementary School, Francisco M. Sablan Middle School, Hopwood Middle School, Tanapag Middle School, Marianas High School, Early Head Start, and the Head Start Program will resume classes on Dec. 10, 2018.

Garapan Elementary School, William S. Reyes Elementary School, Oleai Elementary School, Koblerville Elementary School, Dandan Middle School, Chacha Ocean View Middle School, Saipan Southern High School, Da'ok Academy, and Kagman High School would re-open on Dec. 3, 2018.

GTC, GES, KES, TMS, Da'ok, KHS, and Chacha would have full-day sessions, complete with bus rides as early as 6:30am and as late as 3:30pm.

OES, WSR, KES, SVES, DMS, and FMS will have double sessions, with morning sessions from 7:30am to 11:30am and afternoon sessions from 12pm to 4pm, depending on the student's grade level. Both sessions will have bus rides.

Hopwood, MHS, and Saipan Southern will have half-day session. MHS classes is from 12:30pm to 4:30pm for all grades, while Southern and Hopwood will have classes for all grades from 8:30am to 12:30pm and from 7:30am to 11:30am, respectively. Like the other schools, bus rides are also offered.

For more information, visit the PSS social media page on Facebook or visit the PSS commissioner's office on Capital Hill, building 1211 or call 664-3845. You may also send inquiries through email to info@cnmipss.org.

Court to hear traffic cases today

The CNMI Superior Court will be hearing all traffic arraignments set for today, Nov. 29, at 9am at Suite 212, second floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (former Nauru building). For additional information or assistance, contact the Office of the Clerk of Court, CNMI Superior Court, at (670) 783-8522 or 783-8417 or email patrick.diaz@justice.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

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ATALIG

From Page 1

Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent Haejun Park handles the investigation in the case. Assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley, counsel for the U.S. government, filed the charges before the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

The Ataligs' initial appearance/arraignment is set for Dec. 6 at 11am before Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona.

According to the superseding indictment, from February 2018, to Aug. 7, 2018, Efraim Atalig, acting in his official capacity as Rota mayor, arranged government-funded trips from Rota to San Diego California; Saipan; Palau; and Guam, for himself and other persons, including Evelyn Atalig, by means of false claims.

On March 6, 2018, Mayor Atalig allegedly signed CNMI government travel authorizations for himself and Evelyn Atalig to travel from Rota to San Diego. According to the TAs, the purpose of the trip was to "attend the 9th Annual Chamorro Cultural Festival" and "travel to be performed in the interest of the CNMI government."

However, the main purpose of the trip was personal and not official, according to the indictment.

The Ataligs traveled together from Rota on March 22, 2018, and arrived in San Diego on March 23, 2018. They remained in San Diego for five days, departing for Rota on March 28, 2018.

The Chamorro Cultural Festival was a one-day event, which took place on March 24, 2018.

In addition to plane tickets, the Ataligs allegedly each claimed eight days per diem and received at least $1,500 from the CNMI government.

On April 19, 2018, Mayor Atalig allegedly signed CNMI government TAs for himself and Evelyn Atalig to travel from Rota to Saipan. According to the TAs, the purpose of the trip was "to promote tourism and to attend the 23rd Micronesia Islands Forum and the Flame Tree Festival," and "travel to be performed in the interest of the CNMI government."

However, the primary purpose of the trip was personal and not official, according to the indictment.

The Ataligs traveled from Rota to Saipan on April 24, 2018, and remained on the island for three days. They returned to Rota on April 27, 2018.

In addition to plane tickets, the Ataligs each claimed three days per diem and received at least $500 from the CNMI government.

On April 23, 2018, Mayor Atalig signed CNMI government TAs for himself and Evelyn Atalig to travel from Rota to Palau. According to the TAs, the purpose of the trip was "to promote tourism in Palau" and "travel to be performed in the interest of the CNMI government."

The Ataligs traveled together from Rota to Palau on May 3, 2018. They remained there for three days and returned to Rota on May 7, 2018.

In addition to plane tickets, the Ataligs allegedly each claimed four days per diem and received at least $500 from the CNMI government.

On June 15, 2018, Mayor Atalig signed CNMI government TAs for himself and eight other government employees to travel from Rota to Guam, as well as two TAs for plane charters.

According to the nine of the 11 government TAs signed by the mayor, the purpose of the trip was to go to "DRMO" to look for surplus equipment and "travel to be performed in the interest of the CNMI government."

DRMO refers to a U.S. Department of Defense office formerly known as the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office, but is now called DLA Disposition Services.

One function of this office is to sell surplus and used federal equipment. DLA Disposition Services has an office at Naval Base Guam.

During the trip, Mayor Atalig did not go to DLA Disposition Services to look for surplus supplies or equipment, and no participant on the trip made an advance appointment with DLA Disposition Services, as was required.

The true purpose of the trip was allegedly personal and to participate in a partisan political rally held on June 23, 2018 in Mangilao, Guam.

Federal and CNMI laws restrict the use of public funds, time, personnel, or equipment for political or campaign activity.

The claimed purpose of visiting DLA Disposition Services was intended to disguise and conceal the trip's true purpose to engage in political and campaign activity.

Mayor Atalig allegedly authorized payments from official CNMI government funds to pay per diems and other expenses for himself and up to eight people, as well as to charter two roundtrip air flights from Rota to Guam, departing on June 20, 2018, and returning on June 25, 2018.

The total amount of payments from the CNMI government exceeded $10,000, according to the indictment.

On Aug. 1, 2018, Mayor Atalig signed CNMI TAs for himself and Evelyn Atalig to travel from Rota to Saipan. According to the TAs, the purpose of the trip was "to attend the Agriculture Fair on Saipan" and "travel to be performed in the interest of the CNMI government."

The Ataligs traveled from Rota to Saipan on Aug. 4, 2018, and remained on the island for three days. They returned to Rota on Aug. 7, 2018.

While on Saipan, the two did not attend the CNMI Agriculture Fair, but Mayor Atalig did participate in organized campaign events on Aug. 6, 2018.

In addition to plane tickets, the Ataligs each claimed three days per diem and received at least $500 from the CNMI government.

On Aug. 8, 2018, Mayor Atalig allegedly falsely stated to an FBI special agent that the purpose of the trip was to meet with DLA Disposition Services, and that the visit with DLA Disposition Services had been pre-arranged and approved by the DLA Disposition Services liaison, when in fact he did not go to DLA Disposition Services.

On Aug. 10, 2018, Evelyn Atalig lied to an FBI special agent that the purpose of the trip was to meet with DLA Disposition Services and was an official trip, and that she stayed with her sister while in Guam, when in fact she stayed in a hotel with Mayor Atalig and the purpose of the trip was personal and political, and not official.

The original indictment charged Mayor Atalig with only one count of wire fraud over the Guam political rally. He pleaded not guilty to the charge.

The mayor is facing another case that the Office of the Attorney General filed before the Superior Court arising from the same political rally. In this case, he and seven other Rota municipal officials are charged with theft and misconduct in public office.

Through his private counsel, Robert O'Connor, Mayor Atalig had stated that he did nothing wrong and has nothing to apologize for.

Despite the charges, Mayor Atalig was re-elected as mayor last Nov. 13 election.

DAMAGE

From Page 1

total estimated cost to repair the water and wastewater system on Saipan alone has already reached $626,075.

In his report to the CUC board of directors yesterday, CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho disclosed that damage to the power transmission and distribution system on Saipan involves 1,348 power poles, 767 transformers, and 783,440 feet of wires, for a total estimated cost of $11,841,293.47.

On Tinian, Camacho said, the damage involves 810 power poles, 136 transformers, and 507,015 feet of wires, for a total estimated cost of $5,540,939.64.

This brings the total estimated damage cost to $17,382,233.11 on the power systems of both islands as of last Saturday, said Camacho during the board meeting that was held inside a small CUC room with a damaged ceiling.

On Saipan, power poles that were not damaged totaled 11,297, while poles that were not damaged on Tinian total 1,088, Camacho said.

As for repair costs, as of Oct. 26, CUC's water division's initial cost estimate was $212,825 on Saipan, while the wastewater division's initial cost estimate was $413,250, for a total of $626,075.

As of yesterday morning, Camacho said, 50 percent of Saipan had power and that they expect to get to 100 percent power in the next 60 to 90 days.

On Tinian, Camacho said that CUC is targeting to have 100 percent power before Christmas Day.

Power Plant 1 in Lower Base has an available capacity of 45 megawatts, while the peak load as of last Monday was only 18.1MW, Camacho said.

Power Plant II in Lower Base is offline as it is undergoing inspections and testing, while Power Plant IV in Puerto Rico, which has a capacity of 6.0MW, is offline and remains as a standby station.

Feeder 1 first partial was energized last Oct. 28, Camacho said, giving power to the Commonwealth Health Center and its environs, while power at the Saipan seaport and Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport was restored last Nov. 5 and Nov. 10, respectively.

So far, Camacho said, only Feeder 3 out of nine feeders has 100 percent power, while Feeders 1 and 7 both have 95 percent power.

Feeder 2 has 70 percent power, Feeder 4 has 50 percent, and Kiya I and 2 have 40 percent.

Kiya 3 and 4 feeders remain offline. However, under Kiya 3, Taro Sue to McDonald's areas have been energized from Feeder 3.

Camacho said that personnel from the Guam Waterworks Authority will arrive on Saipan today, Thursday, to stabilize the water system.

On Tinian, Camacho said, water services is at 100 percent.

On Tinian's power, Camacho said partial feeder 2 has been online, providing power at the Tinian Health Center since Sunday.

Electricity is back at Tinian Fuel Services and Department of Public Safety since last Monday, and Bank of Guam and Lucky Qiang Market since last Tuesday.

SEARCH

From Page 1

off search and rescue missions after 72 hours.

Guerrero added that the search and rescue mission for Jones could not be extended and he is classified as still missing.

Guerrero said that the victim's family and all parties involved have been notified that all search efforts have ceased.

In a previous article on *Saipan Tribune*, it said that DFEMS said it received a call from DPS 911 about an overdue diver at the Grotto at 10:30am last Nov. 18.

DFEMS conducted a cliff line search while search teams dove inside Grotto and DPS Boating Safety and Department of Land and Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife conducted a dive search outside the Grotto, in coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard and the Navy helicopter from HC-25 out of Guam.

ARCHITECT

From Page 1

what would be needed to build durable homes, and eventually come up with what he calls "Affordable Concrete Starter House."

"What compelled me to go out and convince the community to go concrete was the damage all over island. After the typhoon, our island turned into rubble and my heart goes out to all those who were affected," he said. "Many people are not wisely informed how to build better and durable homes. …As an architect, I have the technical knowledge and my intention is to share or advise both the government and community in building a stronger and permanent dwelling structure."

His design is intended for low-income families. The size of the house is 576 square feet, where both the roof and walls are made out of concrete. It includes living and dining rooms, one bedroom, a kitchen, and a toilet and bath.

What is unique about this 24x24 house, Cabrera said, is that it is self-sustaining and economical. "The size of the house meets the International Building Code and our CNMI regulations."

The kitchen is designed to be economical as the gas range space can fit a 90-lb gas range that can make a gas tank last a year. The bathroom has a toilet, shower, and bathtub and the water used in the entire house will come from a built-in tank with enough water pressure to source it from Commonwealth Utilities Corp. water.

In the event that there is no CUC water, the 300-gallon tank will still be able to supply water to the shower, toilet, and kitchen using gravity.

A cylinder at the bottom of the house is also built to collect rainwater so this water catchment can supply water for several months to a year.

As for power, the house comes with a solar panel with 420 watts and a 30-gallon solar water heater. The roof will be insulated so the heat will not travel to the rooms.

Cabrera said this design can withstand a Category 5 typhoon and one unit with all of the basic features will cost approximately $45,000.

"I have the basics in my own house, so everything is tried and tested from personal experience… This is not expensive to have and to maintain."

"The design also has provisions for a modified version in case the family wants to expand and add a room and a carport, but this basic house is possible for everyone," he added.

Cabrera believes that now is the time for the government to look seriously into building concrete houses and infrastructure. "We don't want the CNMI to turn into rubble after every typhoon. …A perfect partnership would be between the government and private businesses to ensure the CNMI has stronger infrastructure," he said.

"In the mainland, there is an organization called Habitat. …I hope we can organize something like that here and that is the responsibility of the government," he added.

According to Cabrera, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Small Business Administration should work together on this.

"Sometimes FEMA go out and…they give homeowners, say, $15,000 to $20,000 but how can you build a house [with that]? But if FEMA and SBA will get together, whatever balance that is needed to build the house, SBA can come in," he said.

"I also hope that the government will start to regulate the hardware stores… They are selling fir wood, which is very soft wood and can break in hundred-miles-per-hour wind and, with the recent super typhoon, you are done. Even treated, termites eat them. Most Chalan Kanoa houses were built with this kind of wood," he added.

For more information about Cabrera's design, he can be reached via 287-1778 or email him at hbcabrera@gmail.com.

Facebook: US territories not part of the 'United States'

According to Facebook, the nearly 4 million Americans living in U.S. territories do not live in the "United States."

Instead, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands are each treated as being a separate foreign country.

As a result, residents of U.S. territories were unable to use Facebook's charitable donation tools to support their favorite charities on #GivingTuesday, which was last Nov. 27.

For Equally American, a nonprofit advocacy organization working to end the second-class treatment of Americans living in U.S. territories, Facebook's discriminatory practices both perpetuate misconceptions about U.S. territories and restrict its ability to fundraise on #GivingTuesday.

"Facebook's entry into nonprofit fundraising has a lot to like, with zero fees and a $7 million matching program with Paypal on #GivingTuesday. But it's hard to miss the irony of how Facebook's unequal treatment of Americans in U.S. territories makes it harder for our nonprofit to bring an end to unequal treatment in U.S. territories," said Neil Weare, president and founder of Equally American.

"Facebook has been an important part of our advocacy toolkit, making it easier to build community across five territories and a diaspora that extends throughout the 50 states. But the inability of our supporters in U.S. territories to use Facebook's contribution tools really limits what we're able to achieve using its platform," Weare added.

Equally American is currently litigating the question of whether U.S. territories are in "the United States" for purposes of the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, challenging discriminatory federal laws that deny birthright citizenship in certain U.S. territories.

Equally American's Giving Tuesday campaign on Facebook seeks to raise $10,000 in support of its advocacy. With Facebook and Paypal's match, this would mean $20,000 in overall support—a significant boost for a small nonprofit. But the limits Facebook places on contributors from U.S. territories make it substantially more difficult for Equally American to reach its goal.

Unable to contribute to Equally American through Facebook, residents of U.S. territories must instead donate directly through the nonprofit's own website. This means 2.2 percent in Paypal processing fees, and exclusion from Facebook and Paypal's $7 million matching program.

Responding to an inquiry about Facebook's discrimination against users in U.S. territories, Facebook Support responded: "We know this is frustrating and disappointing to people in Guam and other areas where are tools aren't available, but [we] continue to work with partners to expand to other areas as quickly as possible."

Russell Pate, a supporter of Equally American and former president of the U.S. Virgin Islands Bar Association, demonstrated in a video how Facebook's contribution tool doesn't work in the U.S. Virgin Islands, explaining his concern about "pervasive discrimination that starts at the government and then actually goes down into the private sector. It's very unfortunate to be treated as a second-class citizen." He added: "Every American citizen should have the same rights and same opportunities."

Delegate Stacey Plaskett, who represents the U.S. Virgin Islands as a non-voting member of Congress, reacted to this latest discrimination against residents of U.S. territories by saying, "In the scheme of things, Facebook's discrimination against Virgin Islanders on #GivingTuesday pales in comparison to the discrimination we face every day in federal programs like Medicaid. But no American should be discriminated against simply because of where they live, whether it's by the federal government or a private sector entity like Facebook."

Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo, who represents Guam as a non-voting member of Congress, added: "It is an injustice that Americans living in the U.S. territories are not treated as other Americans living in the states. Facebook is supposed to be about 'bringing the world closer together.' But treating residents of Guam and other U.S. territories as living outside the United States and excluding them from programs like the #GivingTuesday match perpetuates misconceptions and injustices that have long had a negative impact on our communities. I hope that they will reverse this decision and allow Guam residents, and those of the other U.S. territories, to be treated similar to other Americans in the 50 states."

For those unable to donate through Facebook because they live in a U.S. territory, contributions may be made directly to Equally American at www.equalrightsnow.org. ***(PR)***

Lions Club hands out rice on Tinian

Members of the Filipino-American Lions club pose for a photo during their rice distribution on Tinian during Thanksgiving.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_ bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Filipino American Lions Club ventured to Tinian to provide post-Super Typhoon Yutu relief to Tinian residents.

On Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 22, members of the Saipan Filipino American Lions Club from Saipan visited Tinian to distribute 10-lb sacks of rice.

The club reported that 515 individuals benefited from the relief goods.

The Lions Clubs International District 204 Region 1 from Guam provided the financial assistance to make the distribution happen, in collaboration with the United Filipinos Association headed by president Rodney Cabarles and Tinian volunteers.

Saipan Fil-Am Lions club president Lucy Buensalido, club president Flor Miranda, club secretary Ladyvir Canape, and club secretary Yho Villavicencio were present for the distribution.

According to Saipan Lions Club Region 2 chair Annamae Adaza, the club is sworn to offer help to those in dire need, especially in times of calamity.

"Any help that we can extend is really a big thing. Knowing there are a lot of entities trying to help…just helping our neighbor would mean a lot. …[this is] another reason to be thankful that we are all alive," she said.

Saipan Lions Club District governor Daniel Cruz said the goal is to give back to the community even in a small way. "We stand by our motto, 'We serve,'" he said.

For more details about Lions Clubs International, check the website:www.lionsclubs.org.

Drinkable water distribution

The CNMI government will be providing drinkable water today, Nov. 29, at the San Antonio basketball court, from 9am to 12pm, and at the Koblerville Youth Center, from 1pm to 3pm. Residents must bring their own clean water containers. There is a limit of five 5-gallon containers per household. ***(PR)***

VEIOVIS Career Opportunities

Join Our Team

Veiovis revolutionizes a strong vision for high quality healthcare solutions through its expertise in managing medical professionals and clinical staff. With increasing number of members, patients and employer groups, Veiovis continues to grow and expand throughout the region. Join a forward moving company.

We now have the following positions open:

- Dental Auxiliary
- Dental Assistant
- Licensed Practical Nurse – Home Health
- Medical Assistant
- Occupational Therapist
- Optometric Technician
- Patient Services Representative
- Pharmacy Technician
- Registered Nurse – Home Health
- Speech Therapist

Job descriptions can be viewed on our website below.
Please fax resume to 1-671-647-3556 or e-mail to hr@takecareasia.com
http://www.takecareasia.com/career_listing.php

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER AND A DRUG AND SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

Marpac, Hocog, Red Cross welcome relief water

Marianas Pacific Distributors Inc., or Marpac, and the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter received a container of relief water, and are in the process of distributing the water throughout the CNMI, where people need it most.

Marpac resident manager Guy Pudney and the Marpac team, acting governor Victor Hocog, and ARC-NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsch and his team at paid a visit to Marpac to receive the 50,000 cans of water donated by Ambros Inc. Marpac is the local distributor of Ambros products in the region.

From left, James Lee, Beverage Sales manager, Marpac; Glenna SP Reyes, CNMI Planning chief (Yutu Recovery); Tayna Belyeu-Camacho, board chair, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter; acting governor Victor Hocog; John Hirsh, executive director, ARC-NMI Chapter; J.D. Tenorio, disaster program manager, ARC-NMI Chapter; and Guy Pudney, resident manager, Marpac. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"On behalf of the people of the Commonwealth, Gov. [Ralph DLG] Torres and I extend our deepest gratitude to [Marpac] for its partnership in the recovery relief efforts," said Hocog.

"Mr. Guy Pudney and the Marpac family have always been a valuable partner especially in response to the critical needs of our community and we are grateful for their continued partnership. Thank you, Guy and Marpac."

"Every donation helps as it expands the level of assistance given to our people. Our islands only get stronger and more resilient with everyone coming together as one community helping those in needs and one another. Thank you for your continued partnership."

Hirsh said: "The American Red Cross is extremely grateful for Ambros Inc. and Marpac's donation. For many years, Ambros Inc. and MarpaC have been staunch supporters of the American Red Cross and its mission to alleviate human suffering. The water donation will go a long way in providing much needed relief to families on Saipan and Tinian as they continue on their road to recovery."

Pudney himself said: "Safe, clean drinking water is an absolute necessity during these difficult times, not only for the typhoon victims but also for all the relief workers on island who are helping with the recovery efforts. We will work with local organizations to get this water in the hands of the people who need it the most, as fast and as efficiently as we can for both Saipan and Tinian. As a resident of Saipan and a fellow victim of this storm, I assure you that we at Marpac, will do what we can to assist in these trying times." ***(PR)***

No Christmas party for CPA, but 208 staff will get $150 each in subsistence allowance

There will be no Christmas party for the Commonwealth Ports Authority employees this year. Instead, each of the 208 CPA employees will get $150 in cash—not as a "bonus" but as a form of a "subsistence" allowance.

The CPA board of directors approved Tuesday during a special meeting the proposal to give each CPA staff $150 for 208 employees —a total of $31,200—rather than spending the money for the Christmas party.

CPA board financial affairs committee chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said all CPA staff from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota will receive the cash.

The directors are not entitled to the allowance.

CPA personnel committee chair Roman Tudela said they have to be careful not to use the word "bonus" because there will be tax for it.

Tudela proposed to call it subsistence in response to the Super Typhoon Yutu recovery efforts.

A smiling CPA board chair Thomas P. Villagomez then announced, "No Christmas party!"

The giving of cash to employees was among the agenda discussed at Tuesday's special meeting at the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting classroom at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Also present at the meeting were directors Pete Reyes, Barrie C. Toves, and Joseph Diaz, along with some CPA officials and employees.

When *Saipan Tribune* left the meeting Tuesday past 3pm, the directors were still in executive session. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

BOG Tinian re-opens

Effective yesterday, Wednesday, Nov. 28, 2018, Bank of Guam's Tinian branch reopened for business, with the following schedule: Monday through Friday: 9am-4pm; Friday: 9am-6pm; Saturdays: Closed. The Bank of Guam's Chalan Piao Branch on Saipan remains closed. ***(PR)***

Military to conduct live-fire exercise

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct a live-fire gunnery exercise today, Nov. 29, from 8am to 5pm. The exercise will take place within a 10-nautical mile radius of the following coordinates: 13° 21"N/144° 20"E. It is recommended the public, commercial pilots, fishermen and marine tour operators stay clear from this area during the date and time indicated. These types of trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. ***(PR)***

Red Cross service center at Marianas Business Plaza

The American Red Cross continues to meet with families at the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe. In an effort to reduce lines and wait times, Red Cross is issuing color-coded tickets with time blocks for a specific day. Once an individual receives a ticket they will need to return to the service center at the assigned day/time to meet with a Red Cross caseworker. Red Cross is planning to be at this location until at least Wednesday, Nov. 28; however, the needs of the community will drive how long this site is open. Service center hours are from 9am to 6pm. ***(PR)***

Chamber seeks BPOY nominees

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is now accepting nominees for its "Business Person of the Year" award for 2018. The winner will be announced on Jan.19, 2019, during the Installation Dinner, when new Chamber officers will be installed. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the Saipan Chamber of Commerce website and completed nomination forms should be sent to email executive@saipanchamber.com not later than Jan. 7, 2018. ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB19-BECQ-024
SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 24, 2018 TIME: 9:30 A.M.
"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY (TINIAN BRANCH)"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH THE CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-21, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A-D)

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELI D. CABRERA
ADMINISTRATOR, BECQ

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, PROC. & SUPPLY

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP NO.: RFP19-GOV-027
SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 31, 2018 TIME: 1:00 P.M.
"MULTI-DISCIPLINARY PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY SERVICES FOR THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP IS DUE **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS DECEMBER 07, 2018** TO **MS. GLENNA SP REYES**, VIA E-MAIL TO glenna.sp.reyes.ao@gmail.com.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RALPH DLG. TORRES
GOVERNOR

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MVA-RFP-19-2013
Submission/Closing Date: February 19, 2019 Time: 3:00 p.m.

For: Global Branding and Marketing Strategy

Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority
Procurement Office
San Jose Professional Building
Beach Rd., San Jose
P.O. Box 500861
Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work on or after **November 29, 2018, at the Marianas Visitors Authority Office, San Jose Professional Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan**, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Proposals submitted from individuals outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or certified courier services by **February 19, 2019** and must be received within seven (7) working days of that date. Proposers from outside the Commonwealth must notify the MVA in writing of their intent to submit a proposal in order to receive the additional seven (7) days for the receipt of the actual Proposal Documents. Participants outside the **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** must submit a **Notice of Intent** by any mode of written communication including facsimile at+1-670-664-3237 or email to jtorres@mymarianas.com, and must be received by 3 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on **February 12, 2019**.

All questions regarding this RFP must be sent to Judy Torres at jtorres@mymarianas.com or faxed to +1-670-664-3237, **no later than 3 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on January 14, 2019.**

/s/ Marian Aldan-Pierce
Chairperson, Board of Directors

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Directors

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp
Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

INVITATION FOR BID
(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)
Amendment No. 1
BID SUBMISSION DATE:
~~Thursday, November 29, 2018~~ moved to Friday, December 21, 2018
TIME: 09:30 AM
NMHC IFB 2019-001
Rehabilitation and Expansion of the Kagman Community Center

Project package will be available on **October 22, 2018,** at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of one-hundred ($100.00) is required for the project package. Payment must be by cash, credit card, cashier's check or certified check made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented in order to obtain the project package.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A **Mandatory Pre-Bid conference** will be held at **9:00 a.m.** on November 13, 2018, at the project site in Kagman (Kagman Community Center). Failure to attend the Mandatory pre-bid conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670)234-6866/7689; (670)483-9447; or email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Benjamin K. Petersburg
Acting Chairman,
NMHC Board of Directors

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

Govt now required to present accessible financial report

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI government will now be required to submit an annual "citizen-centric report" of its activities to its constituents.

The law that now requires this, Public Law 20-83, was enacted last week after Gov. Ralph DLG Torres signed House Bill 20-155 House Draft 1 into law.

House vice speaker Janet U. Maratita (R-Saipan) introduced H.B. 20-155; it was co-sponsored by Rep. Alice S. Igitol (R-Saipan), which would require all government entities to submit an annual report of its operational activities.

"The intent of a citizen-centric report is to provide transparency and access for residents to an open government," said Torres in separate letters to legislative leaders. "This includes access to financial management information, prioritization of public services, and the opportunity for citizens to provide feedback."

P.L .20-83 said the people of the Commonwealth look to the Legislature to provide transparency and access to government matters that impact their quality of life. "That is why stability, transparency, efficiency, and continuity in the governance systems that our citizens are most immediately concerned with, is so necessary," states P.L. 20-83. "That is why our priority here at the Legislature is to place our citizens at the center of our government. The concept that good governance relies on good citizenry is important, since our democracy is based on a symbiotic relationship which provides a balance that can only be achieved by working together."

Maratita states in the new law that a government that answers and is accountable to the citizenry is a basic foundation of every democracy—"having a responsibility to provide information regarding government operations, most notably in regards to how taxpayer dollars are spent."

"Governments should provide such information in an easily understandable and accessible manner. Financial reports are often too lengthy and too technical for the average person to understand," the new law's findings state.

P.L. 20-83 states that citizens are entitled to transparent information. "We believe that there is an obligation to provide such information."

"Unfortunately, governments often fail to meet their reporting needs, and the poor performance has created a problem of trust between citizens and their government. Governments need new and innovative means of communicating to overcome these challenges," the findings state.

It is the Legislature's intention to ensure that the government must be ready to provide basic information that would be easily understandable by the citizens of the Commonwealth.

US officials: It's OK to eat some romaine, look for labels

By CANDICE CHOI
AP FOOD & HEALTH WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—It's OK to eat some romaine lettuce again, U.S. health officials said. Just check the label.

The Food and Drug Administration narrowed its blanket warning from last week, when it said people shouldn't eat any romaine because of an E. coli outbreak. The agency said Monday the romaine linked to the outbreak appears to be from the California's Central Coast region. It said romaine from elsewhere should soon be labeled with harvest dates and regions, so people know it's OK to eat.

People shouldn't eat romaine that doesn't have the label information, the FDA said. For romaine that doesn't come in packaging, grocers and retailers are being asked to post the information by the register.

Romaine harvesting recently began shifting from California's Central Coast to winter growing areas, primarily Arizona, Florida, Mexico and California's Imperial Valley. Those winter regions weren't yet shipping when the illnesses began. The FDA also noted hydroponically grown romaine and romaine grown in greenhouses aren't implicated in the outbreak.

The labeling arrangement was worked out as the produce industry called on the FDA to quickly narrow the scope of its warning so it wouldn't have to waste freshly harvested romaine. An industry group said people can expect to start seeing labels as early as this week. It noted the labels are voluntary, and that it will monitor whether to expand the measure to other leafy greens and produce.

The FDA said the industry committed to making the labeling standard for romaine and to consider longer-term labeling options for other leafy greens.

Robert Whitaker, chief science officer of the Produce Marketing Association, said labeling for romaine could help limit the scope of future alerts and rebuild public trust after other outbreaks.

"Romaine as a category has had a year that's been unfortunate," Whitaker said.

The FDA still hasn't identified a source of contamination in the latest outbreak. There have been no reported deaths, but health officials say 43 people in 12 states have been sickened. Twenty-two people in Canada were also sickened.

Even though romaine from the Yuma, Arizona, region is not implicated in the current outbreak, it was blamed for an E. coli outbreak this spring that sickened more than 200 people and killed five. Contaminated irrigation water near a cattle lot was later identified as the likely source.

Leafy greens were also blamed for an E. coli outbreak last year. U.S. investigators never specified which salad green might be to blame for those illnesses, which happened around the same time of year as the current outbreak. But officials in Canada identified romaine as a common source of illnesses there.

The produce industry is aware the problem is recurring, said Jennifer McEntire of the United Fresh Produce Association.

"To have something repeat in this way, there simply must be some environmental source that persisted," she said. "The question now is, can we find it?"

Growers and handlers in the region tightened food safety measures after the outbreak this spring, the industry says. Steps include expanding buffer zones between cattle lots and produce fields. But McEntire said it's not known for sure how the romaine became contaminated in the Yuma outbreak. Another possibility, she said, is that winds blew dust from the cattle lot onto produce.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-19-007, REV.1

Restoration of Electric Power Distribution System on Saipan Following Super Typhoon Yutu

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified and experienced contractors to design, restore and commission (including without limitation all design, engineering, supervision, materials procurement and mobilization, installation, testing, commissioning and handover) of its power distribution system on Saipan as more fully described in the Statement of Work.

The solicitation seeks proposals from legally recognized business entities authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (or which will be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth before execution of the agreement) to restore and rebuild its electric power distribution grid on Saipan.

The RFP package consisting of the specifications and plans for the project, will be provided emailed to the interested parties upon request, or may be downloaded fromwww.cucgov.org/procurement/available-bids-and-rfp/. Proposers must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

A mandatory Pre-proposal Conference will be conducted at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room 15, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan on **November 27, 2018 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** A site survey of the affected areas by Prospective Proposers is highly recommended. Prospective Proposers shall familiarize themselves with the site conditions and do their own preliminary assessments prior to submitting the proposal. A site survey of affected areas will be provided upon request to CUC, Power T&D Division. Please email Power Division Manager, Lee Lieto via email address lee.lieto@cucgov.org for scheduling.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies, along with an electronic copy of the proposal on a compact disk in PDF format must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked ***"CUC-RFP-19-007, REV.1 – RESTORATION OF ELECTRIC POWER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM ON SAIPAN FOLLOWING SUPER TYPHOON YUTU"*** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than November 30, 2018 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Discussions may be conducted with responsible Proposers who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing Proposers.

All Proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility for any act of omission on the part of the Proposer due in whole or in part to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under any anticipated contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including without limitation any and all excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws. In particular, Contractors will be required to execute a contract which contains required provisions in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.326 and which are set forth in Exhibit D to the Contract which is included the RFP package.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

Proposers are advised that this project is being procured as an emergency procurement under the authority of the Hon. Gov. Ralph DLG Torres pursuant to 1 CMC §20144 (c) and the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and that ordinary procurement regulations do not apply. Time is of the essence in order to restore power to the people of Saipan. As such, no protests will be entertained.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

P&A Corporation

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FOR URGENT MATERIALS NEEDED:
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Generator (Gasoline)
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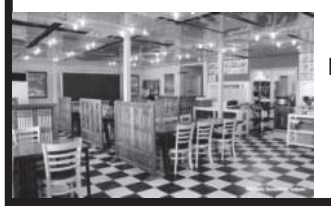
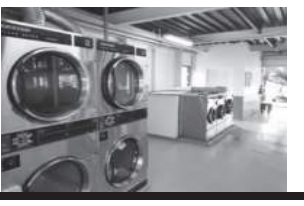


Restaurant Open:
Mon~Sun:
8:00am~2:00pm
5:00pm~9:00pm



Coin-Laundry Open:
Mon~Sun:
6:00am~4:00am

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

US elections are still a wreck

After more than two centuries of democracy, America is still having difficulty counting votes—in certain places, anyway. Many precincts managed the Nov. 6 election smoothly. Orange County, California, for instance, home to a handful of tightly contested congressional races, did the job largely without drama. But others experienced inexcusably long lines and sketchy standards of administration.

Then there's Florida. Despite the trauma it inflicted on the nation in 2000, this swing state, accustomed to narrow margins of victory, was again unprepared. Officials from Governor Rick Scott, who was elected to the U.S. Senate, down to Broward County Supervisor of Elections Brenda Snipes proved themselves unready and incompetent.

The U.S. electorate seems likely to be closely divided for the foreseeable future. Elections will be hard-fought, and passions intense. Leaving these voting-system defects unrepaired is a grave mistake. But exploiting them for partisan advantage, casting doubt on the legitimacy of the electoral process, is worse. Elections need to be better run—and when problems arise, voters need to hold politicians to a higher standard of conduct.

Better election administration shouldn't be difficult. The design of the ballot in Broward ignored guidelines recommended by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. A needlessly confusing layout helps explain why thousands of voters expressed no preference on the Senate race even as they voted in other contests. Multiple Florida counties missed a recount deadline, including nearby Palm Beach, where voting machines overheated. Elsewhere, voters complained of having to fight to keep their votes from being discarded or of being denied permission to vote.

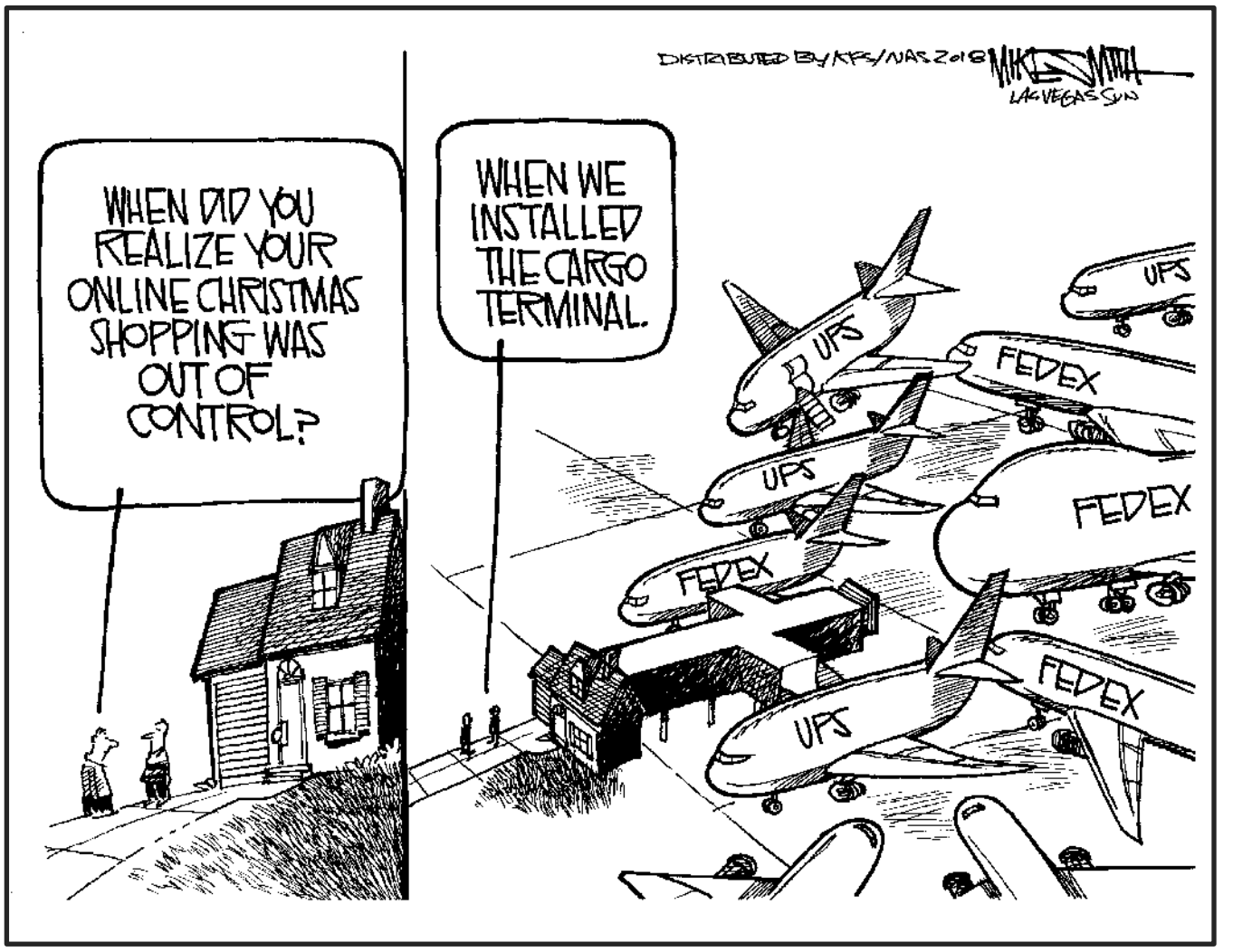
For starters, partisans shouldn't oversee elections. Republican secretaries of state in Georgia and Kansas ran for governor this year. Neither thought it necessary to recuse himself from supervising his own race. Credible charges of partisan vote suppression emerged in both states.

Nonpartisan state-redistricting commissions are starting to catch on, which is good. Michigan, for example, adopted one in a referendum this month. Nonpartisan election administrators are needed as well. That will require bipartisan efforts in the states.

Technology upgrades are also overdue. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, in the 2018 election, 41 states relied on election systems that are at least a decade old; 13 are using voting machines that don't produce a paper backup. In the event of machine failure, cyberattack or other problems, there may be no way to verify the vote count.

Upgrades shouldn't undermine privacy, however. In New York, voters used to vote behind a curtain, turning a lever on an old industrial-age machine. The votes were cast in total privacy—with no chance for stray marks on a ballot. After a system upgrade, voters now fill out paper ballots in privacy-free cubicles, where neighbors can readily gaze over short barriers to see how others are voting. Poll workers sometimes assist voters inserting ballots into scanners, further eroding privacy.

See ELECTIONS on Next Page



The Democrats' big secret is out: They too hate migration.

By FABIOLA SANTIAGO
Miami Herald

Thanks to a rare unscripted moment for Hillary Clinton, the Democrats' big secret is out: It's not only President Donald Trump and his supporters who loath immigrants knocking at our doors. Too many Democrats also reject "migration," she reminds us.

How could I forget?

Before Bill Clinton was president, we were called Cuban refugees.

Even during the unruly Mariel boatlift of 1980 that brought 125,000 people to South Florida during Jimmy Carter's presidency, it remained so. But as Clinton faced the challenge of thousands of Cubans taking to the seas in rickety homemade rafts—35,000 by the exodus' end—we became "migrants," so named by his administration. Haitian refugees, too, fleeing bloody regimes and poverty earned the title, both groups intercepted at sea and detained at newly erected refugee camps at the Navy base in in Guantanamo, Cuba.

Migrant, a word coined by government types to lump together people fleeing for their lives, has a flightiness to it that I detest. It implies people in desperate circumstances have a choice to make—and they choose the convenience of fleeing. It is not so.

But most of all, this vague word keeps privileged, safe people detached from the view of life being sucked out of others.

With a vocabulary stripped from humanity, you can talk about "the migration issue," as Hillary Clinton has done in an interview with The Guardian, and sound perfectly logical to herself as she encourages European leaders to withhold "refuge and support."

How easily she disregards those immigrants across the United States who voted for her when "embrace immigrants, not denigrate them" was her immigration platform in the 2016 presidential election.

"I think Europe needs to get a handle on migration because that is what lit the flame," Clinton said in the interview, conducted before the midterm elections Nov. 6. "I admire the very generous and compassionate approaches that were taken particularly by leaders like Angela Merkel, but I think it is fair to say Europe has done its part, and must send a very clear message—'we are not going to be able to continue provide refuge and support'—because if we don't deal with the migration issue it will continue to roil the body politic."

Oh, how very inconvenient for Democrats that the world has a refugee problem that has brought bigots out of the closet to win elections in the United States and Italy and claim victory in Britain's Brexit referendum—and threatened to do likewise elsewhere in Europe.

But if you can't count on the Democrats in this nation of immigrants to lead on immigration with facts, intelligence and compassion, then who?

Both Republicans and Clinton-styled Democrats fail to understand that most people love their homelands and don't want to leave them, but are forced to do so.

You don't know what it's like to be a refugee fleeing political persecution or the cruelty of a dictatorial regime unless you've been in our skin.

You don't know what it's like to be an immigrant struggling to rise above poverty, hunger, and hopelessness unless you've been poor, hungry and without hope.

You certainly have no idea what it's like to flee a war unless artillery is ripping through your walls, bombs are falling over your head and your children are being gassed to death.

But at least, we thought, some elected to lead could rise above the politics of exclusion, division and racism to provide solutions, not add another deplorable level to the nativist narrative that immigration is what's wrong with the world.

Clinton's words feel like betrayal.

Good people like Dreamers, their parents, and temporary protection status holders who've lived in this country for decades are counting on the Democrats' good sense to bring permanent legal status to their lives.

If top Democrats aren't going to fight for them, then who?

She throws her weight with the Republicans for the sake of "the body politic" at a moment when President Trump has taken extraordinary measures to curtail legal immigration and to keep asylum seekers away from the border, where they do, according

See DEMOCRATS on Next Page

What Facebook really doesn't want you to talk about

By ALEX WEBB
Bloomberg News

Alex Webb is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering Europe's technology, media and communications industries. He previously covered Apple and other technology companies for Bloomberg News in San Francisco.

The headline of the New York Times' eye-opening Nov. 14 investigation into Facebook Inc.'s handling of the past year's torrent of bad news was "Delay, Deny and Deflect."

In Tuesday's hearing at the ludicrously named International Grand Committee on Disinformation and "fake news" in London, it became clearer than ever what the social network giant is trying to keep out of the public discussion: antitrust.

Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg's non-appearance is itself a red herring. He was never going to turn up. The structure of the event, which saw lawmakers from nine countries convene at a U.K. parliamentary select committee, would have been far more likely to elicit a faux pas from the 34-year-old than its Capitol Hill equivalent, since each lawmaker has greater expertise in the field and more time to quiz the subject.

Instead, Richard Allan, Facebook's European lobbying chief, took questions, and the committee ensured there was an empty seat behind a placard with Zuckerberg's name on it _ a barely disguised effort to generate a photo opportunity for the morning newspapers.

Allan seemed willing to give ground on regulation, but with caveats. When asked if Facebook needed a firmer set of rules to deal with political ads, Allan replied "to the extent that there is a simple playbook to work to, that would be incredibly helpful."

But that concession might come at the expense of a broader debate. If it can focus attention on fake news, political advertising and campaigning, Facebook can draw the conversation away from the far more existential issue of antitrust, and whether it has an excessively dominant position in social media and mobile advertising.

The question was raised at the end of the hearing by Charlie Angus, a Canadian member of parliament. The combined reach of Instagram, WhatsApp, Messenger and Facebook is something that should be addressed, he posited. Before Allan had a chance to give a full answer, the committee chair called an end to the proceedings. Unfortunately, he deemed it beyond the scope of the hearing.

Attacking the consumer-facing platforms only scratches the surface. Facebook has a significant position in mobile advertising, and perhaps it should be forced to share more meaningful aggregated data with advertisers. That might pick away at its power, and force it to find other ways to monetize users other than securing their attention with content that includes ads.

A broader conversation beyond political advertising is essential, despite the company's best efforts to convince us otherwise. Facebook's approach is to restrict public policy debate to political subjects, but just as worrying are the vast reams of personal data that it holds and its outsized role in dictating how people interact.

I'm not going to follow my Bloomberg Opinion colleague Joe Nocera in advocating an outright breakup of the company. There's no guarantee that an alternative player would be any more responsible than Facebook has been. But while Facebook waves the white flag on political content with one hand, it's hoping that we don't notice the powerful position it holds with the other.

Did Mariah Carey make the last great Christmas song?

By SHANNON GREEN
Orlando Sentinel

'Tis the season for mistletoe, mangers, menorahs and Mariah Carey. A lot of Mariah Carey actually.

Carey's 1994 song "All I Want For Christmas" ranks as the No. 1 Christmas tune on past billboard charts, Spotify and even local radio stations, proving its staying power as the most successful pop holiday song.

The fact that the most popular Christmas song is 24 years old left me wondering in an industry where change is the only constant, why is it so hard for new artists to break through with new holiday hits?

"Because (older artists are) what they heard. That's how they know that piece," said Dr. John Sinclair, who is a professor of music at Rollins College. "They welcome other arrangements, but for example, I want to hear Bing Crosby sing 'White Christmas.' I think we want to hear the (singer) that made it a classic for us. And there, you're talking some generational issues too."

Pop culture can make us shave the sides of our hair, shred our blue jeans knee caps and become obnoxiously fluent in emoji, but it won't push us past our holiday nostalgia.

Just look at the top streaming songs on the Sunday after Thanksgiving when holiday music kicked into full speed.

Of the top five streaming holiday songs, only one came from a new artist in Ariana Grande's 2014 hit "Santa Tell Me." The other four songs were at least two decades old with Carey's song taking the top spot with 797,683 streams. Other sought-after songs making the rounds included: Brenda Lee's "Rockin Around the Christmas Tree" (1958), Bobby Helms' "Jingle Bell Rock" (1957) and Andy Williams' "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" (1963).

Most of the top streamed songs were older hits sung by the likes of Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin with a few newer covers of older pop Christmas songs by Michael Buble. Newer Christmas songs or new covers by Jessie J and Gwen Stefani, who have both released holiday albums within the past year, did not crack the Spotify charts this past weekend.

"I think a lot of that has to do with where you could say the R&B demographic has shifted to more hip hop and rap," said Dr. John Gennero, who teaches music history at the University of Central Florida. "Many of those artists might not want to do a Christmas album or contribute to that, per say. And that's not necessarily a bad thing, it's just to say where their interests are or where they feel like they can and can't market themselves properly. So I think that's another thing that plays into it."

Popular Christmas songs outside the classic religious standards haven't changed much across the board in the past 50 years. But Gennero said certain genres like country music do have a more consistent path of selling newer holiday albums—even if some of the songs are covers—given the success of artists like Carrie Underwood, Alan Jackson and Garth Brooks.

And there have been breakthrough hits in other genres like rock n'roll (John Lennon's "Happy Xmas" is still one of the top charting holiday songs). One of the biggest alternative music Christmas standards still belongs to Wham's "Last Christmas" and then there is the hip hop classic from Run-D.M.C. "Christmas in Hollis."

The last modern genre to really produce consistent holiday hits that still have impact today would be Motown—making most of those songs at least 50 years old when you consider the mega-hit Jackson 5 holiday album came out in 1970.

Making new Christmas music or even covers of older holiday hits is really, really challenging.

The holidays don't just bring us back to a memory. They bring us back to an emotion.

Regardless of age, culture or class, there is just something transcendent about old school pop Christmas songs. No matter how many voices sang "chestnuts roasting on an open fire," Nat King Cole's 1946 version will always be the best—at least to me and the thousands of other folks out there streaming it this holiday season.

"I think it speaks to a lot of things, but I think it speaks to our familiarity and you know there are things that we want to have the same," said Sinclair, who from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day will have conducted 57 holiday concerts in Central Florida.

"Don't you think there are a lot of things that people are yearning for maybe a favorite time in our life and our music can help us recapture that? Music seeps into parts of the mind, heart and spirit that other things can't."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To friends of Ann and Bill Stewart

I received a phone call from Kathryn Stewart (daughter) that her mom passed away Tuesday morning in West Virginia. This indeed is a sad information to the friends of Ann and Bill. I was able to speak to Bill to let him know that we are saddened by the passing of his wife, Ann, and I will share the information through this letter.

Bill Stewart himself is not in very health but he managed to be strong as much as possible. Bill may be contacted via telephone number 1-304-760-7025; or his daughter Kathryn at 1-304-344-4594.

I had the pleasure of working with Bill Stewart during the Trust Territory regime when he was the industrial economist. In 1990 to 1993 during the time when I was the budget officer, Bill was the staff industrial economist. I am sure many of us here in the CNMI remember Bill and Ann.

Rita and Dave M. Sablan
via email

DEMOCRATS

From Page 8

to U.S law, have the right to request it.

But, then again, his latest move to force asylum seekers to wait in Mexico as cases are processed is reminiscent of her husband's tent-city detention in Guantanamo.

"You don't counter racists by giving in to them just like you don't fight fire with gasoline," Frank Sharry, founder and executive director of Washington-based America's Voice, tells me. "You fight right-wing populists by building a majority coalition that stands up to their divide-and-conquer strategy and stands for populist economic policies that improve lives. That's what Democrats just did, and they soundly defeated Trump's version of ethno-nationalism—without throwing refugees and immigrants under the bus."

There is the slimmest of silver linings to Clinton's ill-timed and misguided comments.

It allows the rest of us to confront what we had forgotten was always there.

For once, it's not Donald Trump's lack of humanity making me so angry I can't breathe.

And, at least now, I can stop mourning Clinton losing the presidency.

ELECTIONS

From Page 8

Addressing shortcomings requires a bipartisan effort in Congress. Legislation introduced in the Senate by Democrat Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Republican James Lankford of Oklahoma would require state election systems to provide backup paper ballots and post-election audits. It got nowhere thanks to squabbles about funding and other conflicts.

But persistent mismanagement and inadequate voting systems aren't the only threats to elections. Another is the current outbreak of partisan demagoguery. Shouting "vote fraud" in a democracy is akin to shouting "fire" in a crowded theater: Given the damage it can do, you'd better mean it.

While the count was still underway in Florida, President Trump tweeted that an "honest vote count" in the state was "no longer possible—ballots massively infected." This was false. Governor Scott, without evidence, accused Democrats of engaging in "rampant fraud" in Broward and Palm Beach (which took an extra helping of gall, coming from a man who had spent some eight years failing to secure the state's election systems).

In Arizona, Trump's efforts to stir discord were received differently. Republican Governor Doug Ducey said fair elections require patience so that every vote can be counted. Arizona Republican Senator Jeff Flake rebutted Trump's claim of "corruption," and a former aide to the late John McCain chastised his party for spreading falsehoods about the vote.

Vote fraud is illegal. A court of law is the proper venue to consider such allegations. The charge should never be made lightly. Trump, Scott and anyone else who levels it should be expected to present evidence. If they cannot, they should be judged accordingly—not as politicians speaking loosely for rhetorical effect, but as threats to the country's democratic system of government.

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The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East to northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.
▲89° ▼76°

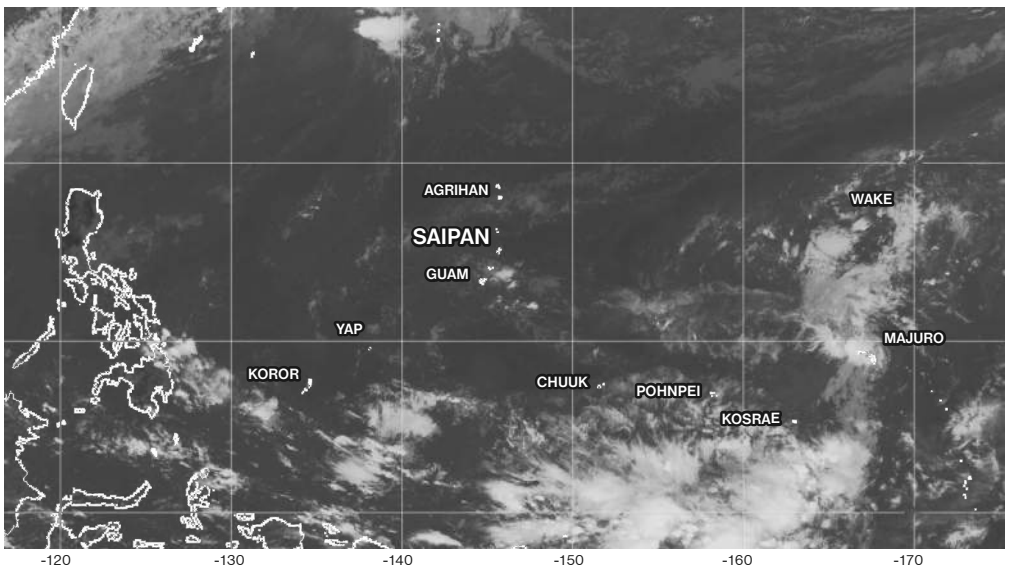
FRIDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers and thunderstorms. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.
▲89° ▼78°

SATURDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.
▲86° ▼78°

SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲89° ▼78°

MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲89° ▼78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:50 AM, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Increasing cloudiness with an approaching trough is evident to the east of the Marianas. partly cloudy skies early this morning will become partly sunny with isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms through tonight. Drier conditions will return for Thursday and Friday, before another trough, likely the remnants of 93W, moves through the Marianas over the weekend. For the weekend, increasing cloudiness and isolated thunderstorms are expected Friday into Saturday with partly cloudy skies returning on Sunday. Model guidance shows increasing moisture for next week by Monday evening, continuing through the remainder of the week. Introduced mostly cloudy skies beginning Monday for now, though increasing showers and thunderstorms are a possibility during the week.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 76°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 76°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	66° / 61°
Beijing	Sunny	50° / 25°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	73° / 68°
Honolulu	Sunny	83° / 73°
London	Rain	55° / 45°
Los Angeles	Rain	63° / 50°
Manila	Mostly Sunny	90° / 75°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	72° / 48°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	73° / 68°
New York	Partly Cloudy	47° / 35°
Osaka	Sunny	61° / 48°
Paris	Showers	54° / 46°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	61° / 45°
Rome	Sunny	55° / 43°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	60° / 47°
San Francisco	Rain	57° / 48°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	50° / 30°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	57° / 45°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	45° / 33°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET
6:10 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.26
1:34 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.96
7:32 PM	LOW TIDE	1.13
11:47 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.56

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:25 AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:26 AM	5:44 PM
Saturday	6:26 AM	5:44 PM
Sunday	6:27 AM	5:44 PM
Monday	6:28 AM	5:45 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	11:52 AM	11:47 PM
Friday	-	12:41 AM	-
Saturday	12:45 AM	1:26 PM	-
Sunday	1:40 AM	2:09 PM	-
Monday	2:34 AM	2:52 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 20, 2018

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) – *temporarily suspended*

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily *resume from Nov 27*

Temporarily suspended:

TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily
OZ626	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) – *resume from Nov 28*

3U8648	6:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH) – *resume from Nov 28*

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) – *resume from Nov 26*

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) – *resume from Nov 27*

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	2, 4 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4 *resume from Nov 28*
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7 *resume from Nov 22*
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN – *temporarily suspended*

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily *resume from Nov 27*

Temporarily suspended:

TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
TW9307	9:05pm	2:25am+1	4
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN – *resume from Nov 28*

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN – *resume from Nov 28*

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN – *resume from Nov 26*

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN – *resume from Nov 27*

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7 *resume from Nov 28*
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7 *resume from Nov 22*
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6 *resume from Nov 22*
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4, 6 via GUM
UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

As shutdown looms, Trump and GOP leaders discuss border wall

WASHINGTON (AP)—With a partial government shutdown possible in just 10 days, President Donald Trump met with Republican leaders to hash out a spending plan that includes funding for Trump's proposed border wall with Mexico.

Trump is seeking $5 billion for the wall, a centerpiece of his 2016 campaign, and is ratcheting up pressure on Congress to provide it. Trump said this month that it could be a "good time" for a shutdown if he doesn't receive the wall funding he wants.

House Republicans approved $5 billion for Trump's wall in a key committee, but a bipartisan bill in the Senate allocates just $1.6 billion for the border.

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., called Tuesday's White House meeting "very productive" and said Trump "is very solid with where he wants to go and what he needs to have a secure border."

House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, R-La., took a hard line on the negotiations, saying Democrats will soon face a crucial question: "Are they going to shut down the government because they don't want to keep America safe?"

Trump said Tuesday he is considering a backup plan if Congress rejects his demand for the $5 billion, possibly including the continued use of troops and razor wire to prevent migrants from entering the country.

"We need Democrat votes to have a wall," Trump said in an interview with The Washington Post. "Now, if we don't get it, will I get it done another way? I might get it done another way. There are other potential ways that I can do it. You saw what we did with the military, with the barbed wire and the fencing, and various other things."

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said the Trump administration hasn't even spent the $1.6 billion Congress approved in the current budget for the wall.

With Republicans in control of the presidency, the House and the Senate, "a shutdown is on their back," Schumer said Tuesday. "Stick to the $1.6 billion."

Democrats and GOP leaders struck a deal earlier this year to fund nearly three-fourths of the government into next year. Left undone, however, is funding for the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees the border, and a few other agencies. They're now running on stopgap funds set to expire Dec. 7.

Complicating border negotiations, Democrats also want to protect special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian election interference and any possible coordination with Trump associates.

"I didn't know Robert Mueller needed protection," McCarthy told reporters, adding that there's "nothing out there" for Mueller or Democrats to fear from Trump or his administration. "But I do know the southern end of our country needs protection."

McCarthy, whose party lost more than three dozen House seats in the midterm elections earlier this month, urged Democrats to work with Republicans on the wall and other legislation, including a long-stalled farm bill, a new tax cut package and criminal justice reform.

"The election is over. Let's put people before politics," McCarthy said. "We've got a problem before us. Let's solve that problem."

Schumer said Democrats support strong border security and believe that $1.6 billion for border security, including physical barriers and technology along the U.S. southern border, "is the right way to go."

White House spokesman Hogan Gidley said Trump and GOP leaders discussed a range of legislative priorities, including the California wildfires, the farm bill and "the great need for border security at this crucial time," as well as prison reform and the budget. The group also talked about Monday's announcement by General Motors that it will shutter five plants and slash 14,000 jobs in North America, Gidley said.

Doug Andres, a spokesman for House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., offered a similar list, adding that talks included "responsible funding for border security."

Trump tests presidential limits by threat to General Motors

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump tested the limits of his presidential authority and political muscle as he threatened to cut off all federal subsidies to General Motors because of its planned massive cutbacks in the U.S.

Trump unloaded on Twitter on Tuesday, a day after GM announced it would shutter five plants and slash 14,000 jobs in North America. Many of the job cuts would affect the Midwest, the politically crucial region where the president promised a manufacturing rebirth. It was the latest example of the president's willingness to attempt to meddle in the affairs of private companies and to threaten the use of government power to try to force their business decisions.

"Very disappointed with General Motors and their CEO, Mary Barra, for closing plants in Ohio, Michigan and Maryland. Nothing being closed in Mexico & China," Trump tweeted. "The U.S. saved General Motors, and this is the THANKS we get!"

He added that his administration was "looking at cutting all GM subsidies, including for electric cars."

Trump's tweets came shortly after National Economic Council Director Larry Kudlow said the White House's reaction to the automaker's announcement was "a tremendous amount of disappointment, maybe even spilling over into anger." Kudlow, who met with Barra on Monday, said Trump felt betrayed by GM.

"Look, we made this deal, we've worked with you along the way, we've done other things with mileage standards, for example, and other related regulations," Kudlow said, referencing the recently negotiated U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement. "We've done this to help you and I think his disappointment is it seems like they kind of turned their back on him."

The White House rebuke appears to fly in the face of long-held Republican opposition to picking winners and losers in the marketplace. A day earlier, Trump issued a vague threat to GM to preserve a key plant in the presidential bellwether state of Ohio, where the company has marked its Lordstown plant for closure.

"That's Ohio, and you better get back in there soon," he said.

It's not clear precisely what action against GM might be taken, or when, and there are questions about whether the president has the authority to act without congressional approval.

Buyers of electric vehicles made by GM and other automakers get federal tax credits of up to $7,500, helping reduce the price as an incentive to get more of the zero-emissions vehicles on the road. But GM is on the cusp of reaching its subsidy limit.

Top EU court hears Brexit challenge as critics slam May deal

BRUSSELS (AP)—The European Union's highest court on Tuesday began considering whether Britain can unilaterally change its mind about leaving the EU, as British Prime Minister Theresa May struggled to contain criticism of her divorce deal from U.K. politicians and U.S. President Donald Trump.

The European Court of Justice is assessing the issue under an accelerated procedure, since Britain is due to leave the bloc on March 29.

Since Article 50 of the EU treaty of Lisbon dealing with departing members is scant on details—largely because the idea of any country leaving the bloc was considered unlikely—a group of Scottish legislators wants to know whether the U.K. can pull out of the withdrawal procedure on its own.

The case comes as pressure builds from Brexit opponents for a second referendum on the decision to leave the bloc.

The court decision is not expected for several weeks and could be dragged out into the new year, close to Britain's departure date.

May is making a blunt appeal to voters and to lawmakers to support her divorce deal, arguing that any alternative would be a jump into the unknown. The Scottish lawmakers want to make clear there is an alternative.

"There is an industrial-scale spin operation from the U.K. government to say that this cannot be turned around, this must be gone through, said Alyn Smith, a Scottish National Party member of the European Parliament who is part of the proceedings.

"I do not believe that is the case."

May insists her Conservative government has no intention of reversing Britain's decision in June 2016 to leave. She is crisscrossing the U.K. on a Herculean quest to drum up support for the Brexit deal before Parliament decides its fate on Dec. 11.

On Tuesday she was holding meetings with business and political leaders in Wales and Northern Ireland—where her parliamentary allies in the Democratic Unionist Party have vowed to vote against the agreement.

DUP leader Arlene Foster claimed that "the prime minister has given up" on getting a good deal.

The Brexit withdrawal agreement, approved by the EU on Sunday, has been savaged by pro-Brexit and pro-EU British politicians as a messy compromise that leaves the U.K. half-in, half-out of the bloc.

May argues that it delivers on voters' decision to leave while protecting jobs and businesses through continued close ties with the EU—achieved by continuing to adhere to EU rules and standards in many areas.

May's sales campaign received a blow from President Donald Trump, who said the agreement seemed like a "great deal for the EU" that would make it more difficult for the U.K. to strike a trade deal with the U.S.

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Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Janice E. Castro
Director, DCRM

NOTICE OF RESCHEDULED MEETING
OF THE CRM AGENCY OFFICIALS

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog through the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials meeting that was scheduled for Tuesday, November 27, 2018, at 9:30AM, has been rescheduled for ***Monday, December 03, 2018, 2:30PM*** at the BECQ 2nd Floor Main Conference Room, in Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda
D. Adoption of September 06, 2018 Meeting Minutes

II. PERMIT APPLICATION REVIEW
A. Project: CMS KANNAT TABLA QUARRY – The Construction and Materials Supply, Inc. (CMS) is currently engaging in quarrying activities of an old and existing quarry site located on two leased public land properties in Kannat Tabla, specifically identified as Lot Nos. 035 H 01 and 035 H 02. Total area for the two lots is approximately 60,481 square meters, more or less.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-95-X-48, Amendment 2018-1
1) Discussions Regarding Kannat Tabla Residents' Concerns
2) Agencies' Updated Permit Conditions
3) CRM Permit Amendment Status Determination

B. Project: CMS SOLTEN QUARRY – The Construction and Material Supply, LLC (CMS) is requesting to extend its existing quarry operation in San Vicente, Saipan. This project is permitted under CRM Major Siting Permit No. SMS-97-X-59 and in 2016, CMS amended its permit to expand its rock quarry operation on approximately 20,800 square meters of private land identified as Lot No. 062 H 03. The proposed operation is projected to yield about one million cubic yards of limestone materials over a period of 10 years.

CMS issued a letter dated September 7, 2018 requesting to renew Permit No. SMS-97-X-59, Amendment 2006 to continue its quarry operations for a period of ten years or more with an option to renew for an additional term depending on the extraction rate driven by the demand for quarry products in the CNMI. Furthermore, CMS will not be changing its use and project yield of one million cubic yards of extracted materials but would like to include a temporary use for stockpiling of aggregates being extracted from nearby CMS quarry sites.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-97-X-59, Amendment 2019-1
1) Discussion, Comments, and/or Questions
2) Agencies' Updated Permit Conditions
3) CRM Permit Application Status Determination, *Final Determination*

C. Project: IMPERIAL PACIFIC RESORT CONDITIONAL COMPLETION EXTENSION – Imperial Pacific International (CNMI), LLC is requesting to extend the completion date of the amended completion date of August 31, 2018 to February 28, 2021 as approved by the Casino License Agreement Amendment No. 6.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2015-X-029, Amendment 2019-1
1) Discussion, Comments, and/or Questions
2) Agencies' Updated Permit Conditions
3) CRM Permit Amendment Status Determination, *Final Determination*

III. OTHER MATTERS
IV. ADJOURNMENT
All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony regarding the above agenda items. (NOTE: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

/s/ JANICE E. CASTRO
Director, DCRM

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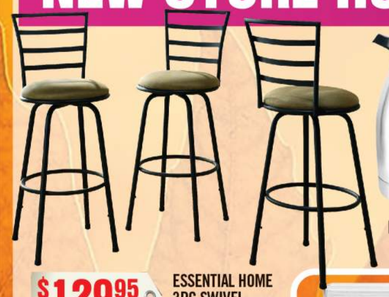

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Nation

GOP US Sen. Hyde-Smith wins divisive runoff, keeps her seat

JACKSON, Miss. (AP)—Republican U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith won a divisive Mississippi runoff Tuesday, surviving a video-recorded remark decried as racist and defeating a former federal official who hoped to become the state's first African-American senator since Reconstruction.

The runoff was rocked by the video, in which Hyde-Smith said of a supporter, "If he invited me to a public hanging, I'd be on the front row." A separate video showed her talking about "liberal folks" and making it "just a little more difficult" for them to vote.

The comments by Hyde-Smith, who is white, made Mississippi's history of racist lynchings a theme of the runoff and spurred many black voters to return to the polls Tuesday.

In the aftermath of the video, Republicans worried they could face a repeat of last year's special election in Alabama, in which a flawed Republican candidate handed Democrats a reliable GOP Senate seat in the Deep South. The GOP pumped resources into Mississippi, and President Donald Trump made a strong effort on behalf of Hyde-Smith, holding last-minute rallies in Mississippi on Monday.

Her supporters portrayed the furor over her comments overblown.

Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith casts vote from her polling precinct in Brookhaven in Mississippi's Senate race (Nov. 27)

"So many things are taken out of context," said Elizabeth Gallinghouse, 84, from Diamondhead, Mississippi. "The fact that she toured Jefferson Davis's house. You or I could have done the same thing. They said, 'Put this cap on. Hold this gun.' It was a fun time. She wasn't trying to send any messages."

The contest caps a campaign season that exposed persistent racial divisions in America—and the willingness of some political candidates to exploit them to win elections. With Hyde-Smith's victory, Republicans control 53 of the Senate's 100 seats. The GOP lost control of the House, where Democrats will assume the majority in January.

In the final weeks of the runoff, Hyde-Smith's campaign said the remark about making voting difficult was a joke. She said the "public hanging" comment was "an exaggerated expression of regard" for a fellow cattle rancher. During a televised debate nine days after the video was publicized, she apologized to "anyone that was offended by my comments," but also said the remark was used as a "weapon" against her.

Democratic opponent Mike Espy, 64, a former U.S. agriculture secretary, replied: "I don't know what's in your heart, but I know what came out of your mouth."

The "public hanging" comment also resonated with his supporters.

Some corporate donors, including Walmart, requested refunds on their campaign contributions to Hyde-Smith after the videos surfaced.

Hyde-Smith was in her second term as Mississippi agriculture commissioner when Republican Gov. Phil Bryant appointed her to temporarily succeed GOP Sen. Thad Cochran. The longtime lawmaker retired in April amid health concerns.

The win makes Hyde-Smith, 59, the first woman elected to Congress from Mississippi.

Hyde-Smith and Espy emerged from a field of four candidates Nov. 6 to advance to Tuesday's runoff. Her win allows her to complete the final two years of Cochran's six-year term.

AP

Republican U.S. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith calls on her family members to identify themselves as she celebrates her runoff win over Democrat Mike Espy in Jackson, Miss., Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2018.

Judge to utility: Explain any role in deadly California fire

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—A U.S. judge overseeing a criminal case against Pacific Gas & Electric Co. asked the utility Tuesday to explain any role it may have played in a massive wildfire that destroyed a Northern California town and killed nearly 90 people.

Judge William Alsup in San Francisco directed PG&E in a court filing to respond to a series of questions about power line safety and wildfires. He is overseeing a jury verdict and sentence against PG&E after a natural gas pipeline explosion killed eight people and destroyed 38 homes in the San Francisco Bay Area eight years ago.

Investigators have not determined the cause of the wildfire that began Nov. 8 and tore through the town of Paradise , destroying nearly 14,000 homes and killing at least 88 people. Speculation, however, has centered on PG&E, which reported an outage around the time and place the fire ignited.

Another transmission line also malfunctioned a short time later, possibly sparking a second fire.

In Tuesday's filing, Alsup said he wants to know whether any requirements in the sentence handed down last year for the 2010 pipeline blast in San Bruno "might be implicated" if the reckless operation or maintenance of PG&E power lines ignited a wildfire. He noted that the sentence required PG&E not to engage in any additional crimes.

Another judge had ordered the utility to pay a $3 million fine and run television commercials publicizing its pipeline safety convictions. He also ordered an independent monitor to oversee the safety of its gas pipeline system and put the company on probation for five years.

PG&E spokeswoman Erin Garvey said the utility was aware of Alsup's notice and was reviewing it.

"We continue to focus on assessing infrastructure, safely restoring power where possible and helping our customers recover and rebuild," she said.

Alsup also asked what requirements of the sentence might be affected by any "inaccurate, slow, or failed reporting of information about any wildfire by PG&E" and what steps the independent monitor has taken to improve the utility's safety and reporting on power lines and wildfires.

The judge asked for "an accurate and complete statement of the role, if any," that PG&E played in "causing and reporting" the Northern California fire and all other wildfires in California since its sentencing.

Alsup's questions also were directed to the U.S. attorney's office, which prosecuted PG&E for the San Bruno blast, and the monitor overseeing its gas pipeline safety.

Several fire victims have sued the company, blaming its equipment for the blaze.

ACROSS THE NATION

Report: Fewer immigrants in US without legal status

WASHINGTON (AP)—The number of immigrants in the U.S. without legal status has declined to its lowest level in more than a decade, according to a new report released Tuesday. The nonpartisan Pew Research Center said 10.7 million immigrants lacked legal status in 2016, down from 11 million a year earlier and from a peak of 12.2 million in 2007 before the U.S. economy slumped. It is the lowest number since 2004, the report said. The decline stems largely from a drop in the number of Mexican immigrants living in the U.S. illegally to 5.5 million in 2016 from nearly 7 million in 2007. Some returned to their country to reunite with family, while others were deported. During the same period, the number of immigrants from Central America without legal status increased to nearly 1.9 million from 1.5 million. The report comes as the Trump administration has cracked down on immigration and bolstered security on the Southwest border, where thousands of Central American families have arrived to seek asylum. The report is based on U.S. Census Bureau data. It also noted an increase in the number of immigrants without legal status from India and Venezuela and a decrease in those from Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Korea and Peru.

Man charged after 2 people targeted by driver at synagogue

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A motorist accused of trying to run down two men leaving a Los Angeles synagogue pleaded not guilty Tuesday to felony charges with a hate crime allegation. Mohamed Abdi Mohamed, 32, is charged with two counts of assault with a deadly weapon. Deputy Police Chief Horace Frank has said Mohamed yelled anti-Semitic remarks at the men Friday night, made a U-turn and drove at them before they took cover behind a car and an electrical box. The suspect made another U-turn and targeted the men again before crashing into another car in the Wilshire-area neighborhood, Frank said. Nobody was hurt. Mohamed, who was born in Somalia, is a U.S. citizen who lives in Seattle. Deputy District Attorney Richard Ceballos said during the arraignment Tuesday that authorities believe Mohamed traveled to California to commit the crime. An attorney from the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office countered that the prosecution's theory was speculative. Police Chief Michel Moore has said investigators believe Mohamed was acting alone and not as a member of a group.

Police: Driver sped toward Virginia Executive Mansion

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—Virginia Capitol Police say they have filed multiple charges against a man who they say drove onto Capital Square without permission and approached the Executive Mansion while speeding. Police spokesman Joe Macenka said charges filed against 29-year-old John F. Landers II of Henrico County Tuesday include assault on a law enforcement officer and driving under the influence of drugs. Police say Landers drove onto the square and forced an officer to jump out of the way. Landers was arrested after authorities say he parked his car on the South Portico of the Capitol, which is off-limits to cars, and fled down a hill. Macenka said Gov. Ralph Northam and his wife are in Richmond and were in and out of the Executive Mansion all day.

Asia

Pilots struggled to control plane that crashed in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Black box data show Lion Air pilots struggled to maintain control of a Boeing jet as its automatic safety system repeatedly pushed the plane's nose down, according to a draft of a preliminary report by Indonesian authorities investigating last month's deadly crash.

The investigators are focusing on whether faulty information from sensors led the plane's system to force the nose down. The new Boeing 737 MAX 8 plunged into the Java Sea on Oct. 29, killing all 189 people on board.

Information from the Lion Air jet's flight data recorder was included in a briefing for the Indonesian Parliament.

Indonesian authorities were due to release the findings Wednesday but not to draw conclusions from the data they present.

Peter Lemme, an expert in aviation and satellite communications and a former Boeing engineer, wrote an analysis of the data on his blog.

The MAX aircraft, the latest version of Boeing's popular 737 jetliner, includes an automated system that pushes the nose down if a sensor detects that the nose is pointed so high that the plane could go into an aerodynamic stall.

Lemme described "a deadly game of tag" in which the plane pointed down, the pilots countered by manually aiming the nose higher, only for the sequence to repeat about five seconds later. That happened 26 times, but pilots failed to recognize what was happening and follow the known procedure for countering incorrect activation of the automated safety system, Lemme told The Associated Press.

Lemme said he was also troubled that there weren't easy checks to see if sensor information was correct, that the crew of the fatal flight apparently wasn't warned that similar problems had occurred on previous flights, and that the Lion Air jet wasn't fixed after those flights.

National Transportation Safety Committee investigator Nurcahyo Utomo holds a model of an airplane during a press conference on the committee's preliminary findings on their investigation on the crash of Lion Air flight 610, in Jakarta, Indonesia, Wednesday, Nov. 28, 2018. AP

"Had they fixed the airplane, we would not have had the accident," he said. "Every accident is a combination of events, so there is disappointment all around here," he said.

Boeing did not immediately respond to two emails and a phone call requesting comment. The company said last week that it remains confident in the safety of the 737 MAX and had given airlines around the world two updates to "re-emphasize existing procedures for these situations."

Pilots at American Airlines and Southwest Airlines complained this month that they had not been given all information about the new system on the MAX. More than 200 MAX jets have been delivered to airlines around the world.

The Indonesian investigation is continuing with help from U.S. regulators and Boeing. Searchers have not found the plane's cockpit voice recorder, which would provide more information about the pilots' actions.

ASIA BRIEFS

22 dead in blast outside northern China chemical plant

BEIJING (AP)—An explosion early Wednesday outside a chemical plant in northeastern China has killed at least 22 people and destroyed scores of vehicles. An official news release said the blast occurred just after midnight at a loading dock next to the plant operated by the Hebei Shenghua Chemical Industry Co. Ltd. The plant is in the city of Zhangjiakou, which is to play host to the 2022 Winter Olympic Games. Another 22 people were injured and 38 trucks and 12 passenger cars were destroyed by fire, the statement from the Zhangjiakou city government said. "We request that citizens do not go to the site to watch in order to avoid disrupting recovery efforts," the statement said. Industrial safety is a major concern in China, where requirements for the storage and transport of chemicals and other dangerous products are often weakly enforced. A massive explosion in 2015 traced to improperly stored chemicals killed at least 173 people in Tianjin, about an hour east of Beijing.

Arrested French official suspected of spying for North Korea

PARIS (AP)—France's domestic intelligence agency is investigating an employee of the French Senate who is suspected of spying for North Korea, a judicial official said Tuesday. Senate president Gerard Larcher, informed of the investigation, authorized a search of the office of Benoit Quennedey, chief administrator for Architecture, Patrimony and Gardens, Larcher's office said. The statement added that the suspect was formally suspended from his job while the probe continues. Quennedey was detained Sunday in the investigation—opened in March—into "collecting and delivering information to a foreign power susceptible to harming fundamental interests of the nation," the judicial official said. A security official also confirmed he was suspected of spying for North Korea. Both officials weren't authorized to be publicly named discussing the sensitive matter. Publishing house Delga said on its website that Quennedey traveled to the Koreas in his role as the head of the French-Korean Friendship Association, and wrote a book and essays about North Korea.

US doctor warns against backlash to gene-edited baby claim

HONG KONG (AP)—A prominent American scientist is warning against a backlash to the claim that a Chinese scientist has helped make the world's first gene-edited babies. Harvard Medical School dean Dr. George Daley says it would be unfortunate if a misstep with a first case led scientists and regulators to reject the good that could come from altering DNA to treat or prevent diseases. Daley spoke Wednesday at an international conference in Hong Kong, where the Chinese scientist, He Jiankui (HEH JEE-ahn-qway) of Shenzhen, also is scheduled to speak. He says his lab used the powerful gene-editing tool CRISPR to alter the DNA of human embryos to try to help them resist possible future infection with the AIDS virus. He said twin girls with the altered genes were born earlier this month. There is not yet independent confirmation of his claim, but scientists and regulators have been swift to condemn the experiment as unethical and unscientific.

South Korea apologizes over vagrants' detention, forced work

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's top public prosecutor apologized Tuesday over what he described as a botched investigation into the enslavement and mistreatment of thousands of people at a vagrants' facility in the 1970s and 1980s nearly three decades after its owner was acquitted of serious charges.

The remarks by Prosecutor General Moon Moo-il were the government's first formal expression of remorse over one of the worst human rights atrocities in modern South Korea. They add pressure for parliament to pass legislation to start a deeper inquiry into what happened at the now-closed Brothers Home, whose owner was exonerated from serious charges amid an obvious cover-up orchestrated at the highest levels of government.

"The past government created a directive that had no base in laws and used state power to detain citizens at the Brothers Home confinement facility with the disguised purpose of protecting them; more than that (inmates) were subjected to forced labor, while experiencing brutal violence and other harsh violations of their human rights," Moon said, stopping several times during his statement while appearing to hold back tears.

"I accept with a heavy heart the results of our committee (on past cases) that the prosecution then caved into pressure from above and closed its investigation prematurely. Even on the charges that were included in the indictment, the defendants weren't properly punished during the trials. This was a process that cannot be described as democracy."

Moon delivered his apology in a meeting with about a dozen former inmates, most of whom were children when they were snatched off the street by police and city officials and locked up at Brothers Home. They spoke of their experiences at the facility, including slave labor and near-daily assaults, how their sudden disappearance ruined their families, and how they have struggled with their lives since.

"I have no friends because I couldn't go to school," said Park Sun-yi, who spent more than five years at Brothers Home after being snatched by police at the age of 9. "We have no families to go to at Chuseok," she said, referring to the Korean Thanksgiving.

No one has been held accountable for hundreds of deaths, rapes and beatings at Brothers Home that were documented by an Associated Press report in 2016 . The AP report was based on hundreds of exclusive documents and dozens of interviews with officials and former detainees, which showed that the abuse at Brothers Home was much more vicious and widespread than previously known.

Military dictators in the 1960s to 1980s ordered roundups to beautify the streets, sending thousands of homeless and disabled people and children to facilities where they were detained and forced to work. The drive intensified as South Korea began preparing to bid for and host the 1988 Summer Olympics. Brothers Home, a mountainside compound in the southern city of Busan, was the largest of these facilities and had around 4,000 inmates when its horrors were exposed in early 1987.

Kim Yong Won, the former prosecutor who exposed Brothers Home, told AP that high-ranking officials blocked his investigation under direction from the office of military strongman Chun Doo-hwan, who feared of an embarrassing international incident on the eve of the Olympics.

Death tallies compiled by the facility claimed 513 people died between 1975 and 1986, but the real toll was almost certainly higher. Kim's investigation records include transcripts of interviews of multiple inmates who said officials refused to send people to hospitals until they were nearly dead for fear of escape.

Kim, now a lawyer, wasn't able to indict Brothers Home owner Park Inkeun or anyone else for widespread abuses at the facility and was left to pursue much narrower charges linked to embezzlement and construction law violations and confinement at a construction site in Ulsan where inmates were forced to work.

"The prosecutor general's apology is an important step toward fully revealing the truth of Brothers Home and compensating the surviving victims," Kim said.

Former Brothers Home inmates have received no compensation. They have been calling for a new investigation to establish the government's responsibility more clearly and create a base for compensation.

World

Mexico accepts housing migrants, seeks US development aid

Migrant children arrive to Tijuana after traveling in a truck from Mexicali, part of the migrant caravan, in Mexico, Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2018. AP

TIJUANA, Mexico (AP)—As Mexico wrestles with what to do with more than 5,000 Central American migrants camped out at a sports complex in the border city of Tijuana, President-elect Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's government signaled Tuesday that it would be willing to house the migrants on Mexican soil while they apply for asylum in the United States—a key demand of U.S. President Donald Trump.

Mexico's new foreign minister also called on the Trump administration to contribute to development projects to help create jobs in Central America to stem the flow of migrants from the impoverished region, suggesting an appropriate figure would start at $20 billion.

"We cannot determine at what pace people are interviewed" by U.S. officials as part of the asylum process, the incoming foreign relations secretary, Marcelo Ebrard, told a news conference in Mexico City. U.S. border inspectors are processing fewer than 100 asylum claims a day at Tijuana's main crossing to San Diego, creating a backlog of thousands.

"So, what do we have to do?" Ebrard asked. "Prepare ourselves to assume that a good part of them are going to be in this area of Mexico for the coming months."

"We have to support local authorities" in housing and feeding the migrants, he said, adding: "That is not a bilateral negotiation. That is something we have to do."

Migrants from different central american countries talk about their options amid a growing feeling that they had little hope of making successful asylum bids in the United States or of crossing the border. (Nov 27)

Lopez Obrador, who won a crushing July 1 election victory and takes office on Saturday, built his political career on defending the poor. He now faces the difficult task of placating Trump on the migrant issue while upholding Mexico's longstanding position of demanding better treatment for migrants.

Ebrard told reporters Tuesday a key administration goal is securing a U.S. commitment to development projects in Honduras, where the vast majority of the migrants in the caravan come from, as well as neighboring Guatemala, El Salvador and elsewhere in Central America.

"What are we negotiating with the United States? We want them to participate in the project I just mentioned" to create jobs in Central America. Asked how much the U.S. should contribute, Ebrard suggested the figure should be at least $20 billion.

"Mexico by itself is going to invest in our own territory during the next administration, more than $20 billion, and so any serious effort regarding our brothers in El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, should be for a similar amount," Ebrard said.

Ebrard's statements came as anxious Tijuana residents closed down a school next to a sports complex where thousands of migrants have been camped out for two weeks.

The move came after U.S. border agents fired tear gas into Mexico to turn back a group of migrants who had breached the border over the weekend. The incident prompted Mexican authorities to step up the police presence around the shelter.

Citing fears for their children's safety, the parents' association of the Gabriel Ramos Milan elementary school bought their own lock and chain and closed the school's gates. A sign said the school would remain closed until further notice.

Carmen Rodriguez said parents had been calling for authorities to do something since the migrants arrived, adding that her 9-year-old daughter wouldn't be returning to classes until they are gone.

"We are asking that they be relocated," Rodriguez said, noting that some migrants had approached the school grounds to ask children for money and use the school's bathrooms. Some even smoked marijuana around its perimeter walls, she said.

She said the parents worry about anti-migrant protesters converging on the sports complex again, as they did last week. "If they come here and there is a confrontation, we will be caught in the middle," she said.

The migrants themselves were urgently exploring their options amid a growing feeling that they had little hope of making successful asylum bids in the United States or of crossing the border illegally.

Most were dispirited after the U.S. agents fired tear gas on the group of migrants trying to cross into the U.S. on Sunday. They saw the clash and official response as hurting their chances of reaching the U.S. Mexico's National Migration Institute reported that 98 migrants were being deported after trying to breach the U.S. border. The country's Interior Department said about 500 people attempted to rush the border, while U.S. authorities put the number at 1,000.

There was a steady line Tuesday outside a tent housing the International Organization for Migration, where officials were offering assistance to those who wanted to return to their home countries.

Officials also reported more interest from migrants wanting to start the process of staying in Mexico. A job fair matching migrants with openings in Baja California saw a growing number of inquiries.

"What happened yesterday harms all of us," Oscar Leonel Mina, a 22-year-old father from San Salvador, said of Sunday's border clash.

Mina, his wife and their toddler daughter avoided the protest and were glad they did after hearing others recount what unfolded, he said.

The events made Mina rethink his family's plan of making it to the U.S. He says he's heard people talk of Rosarito, a beach town popular with U.S. tourists about a 40-minute drive south of Tijuana.

Russia starts prosecuting Ukrainians after sea clash

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—Russia on Tuesday began prosecuting the crew of Ukrainian navy vessels captured over the weekend in a confrontation off Crimea, putting some of the seamen on camera, where they confessed to intruding into Russian waters.

Ukraine demanded that Russia stop using "psychological and physical pressure" on the sailors, as tensions between the two neighbors escalated. Ukraine's top diplomat called the men "prisoners of war," telling The Associated Press that displaying them on TV was a crime.

Russia and Ukraine have blamed each other for Sunday's clash in the Kerch Strait, which links the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. The incident has drawn strong criticism of Russia by the United States and its allies and fueled fears of a full-blown conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Ukraine's parliament on Monday adopted a motion by President Petro Poroshenko to impose martial law for 30 days in parts of the country—a measure that Kiev avoided even when Russia annexed the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 or sent clandestine troops and weapons to separatists in eastern Ukraine.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov warned the move could cause hostilities to flare up in eastern Ukraine.

"The introduction of martial law could potentially raise the threat of escalation of tensions in the region of conflict," he told reporters.

Ukrainian troops have been fighting Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine since 2014, a conflict that has left over 10,000 dead, but fighting has eased since a truce in 2015. Martial law went into effect in several parts of Ukraine, including areas bordering territory held by the separatists.

In Sunday's confrontation, Ukraine sent three small naval vessels from their Black Sea base in Odessa to Berdyansk on the Sea of Azov. The Russian coast guard blocked their way near the Kerch Strait and at one point rammed one of the Ukrainian vessels to keep it from passing through the narrow waterway.

Lebanon minister: Syrian abuses slow return of refugees

BEIRUT (AP)—Some refugees who have gone back to Syria from Lebanon have been killed, detained or forced to join the military, abuses that deter others from returning, a Lebanese Cabinet minister said Tuesday.

Minister of State for Refugees Affairs Mouin Merhebi told The Associated Press that 20 refugees have been killed since refugee started returning from Lebanon in June. His claims have been contested by groups that closely monitor the Syria conflict and by Lebanese officials close to the Syrian government.

Merhebi said that so far about 12,000 Syrian refugees have returned home from Lebanon since June. His numbers are much lower than those released by Lebanon's General Security Directorate, which says more than 87,000 have returned.

Merhebi, who is a harsh critic of the Syrian government and its Lebanese ally Hezbollah, said some of those who have been registered as returnees go back and forth between the two neighboring countries.

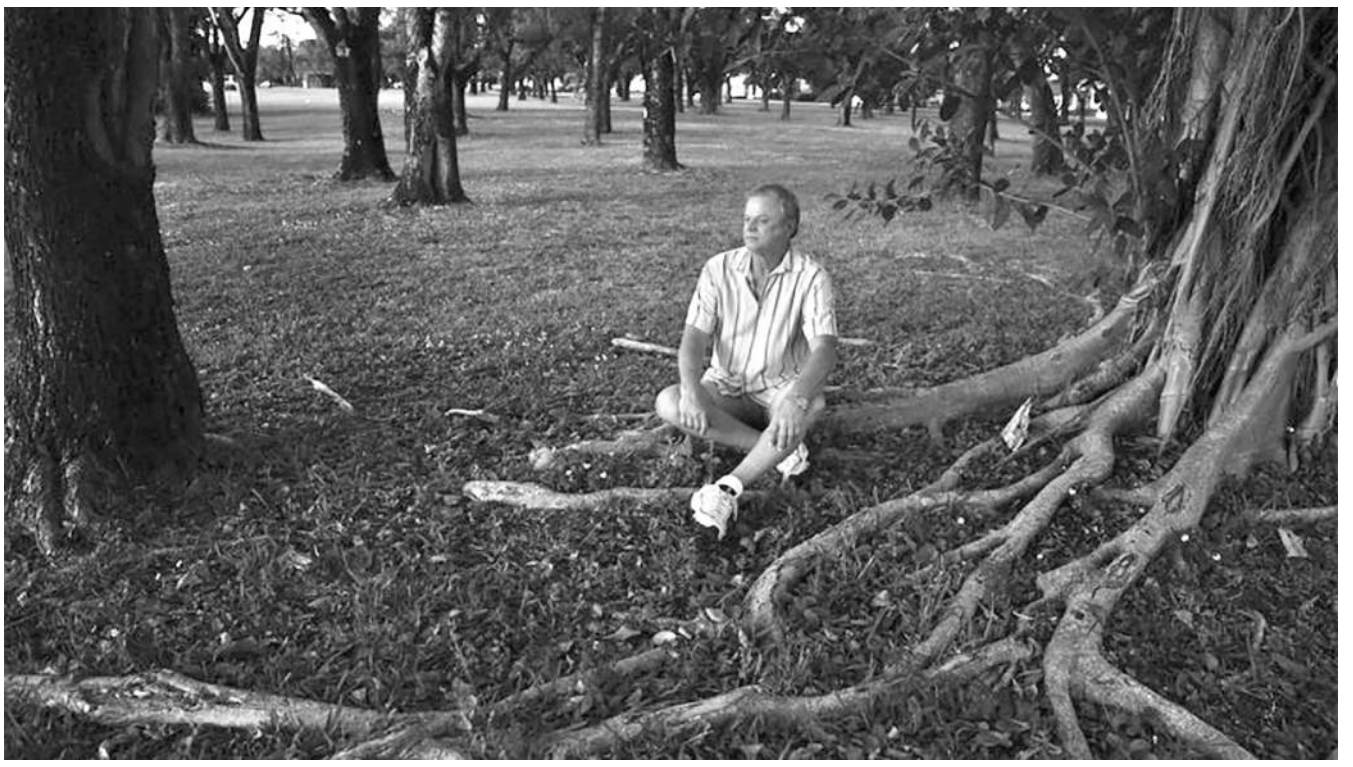
Either way, it's a small fraction of the hundreds of thousands who fled to Lebanon to escape the civil war, which began in 2011.

Syria's seven-year conflict has displaced nearly half the country's population, with an estimated 6 million internally displaced and 5.6 million fleeing to neighboring countries and Europe, and registering with the United Nations Refugee Agency.

"What we are sure about is nearly 20 (got killed) and there are three cases that I personally documented and I spoke with their relatives and received their photos," Merhebi said, before flipping through his smartphone showing photos of three young men who he said were killed in their village near the Lebanon border after crossing into Syria. He said his information about Syrians getting killed back home came from relatives residing in Lebanon. He did not offer any concrete evidence beyond that.

"Such acts discourage Syrian refugees from returning home," Merhebi said.

Focus



AP

Mike Touchette, a survivor of the Jonestown mass suicides and murders in Guyana, poses for a portrait on Monday, Nov. 12, 2018, in Miami Springs, Fla. "We built a community out of nothing in four years," recalled Touchette, now a 65-year-old grandfather who has worked for a Miami hydraulics company for nearly 30 years. "Being in Jonestown before Jim got there was the best thing in my life."

Young Jonestown survivors lost everything, built new lives

By TIM REITERMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—Jonestown was the highlight of Mike Touchette's life—for a time.

The 21-year-old Indiana native felt pride pioneering in the distant jungle of Guyana, South America. As a self-taught bulldozer operator, he worked alongside other Peoples Temple members in the humid heat, his blade carving roads and sites for wooden buildings with metal roofs. More than 900 people lived in the agricultural mission, with its dining pavilion, tidy cottages, school, medical facilities and rows of crops.

"We built a community out of nothing in four years," recalled Touchette, now a 65-year-old grandfather who has worked for a Miami hydraulics company for nearly 30 years. "Being in Jonestown before Jim got there was the best thing in my life."

Jim was the Rev. Jim Jones—charismatic, volatile and ultimately evil. It was he who dreamed up Jonestown, he who willed it into being, and he who brought it down: first, with the assassination of U.S. Rep. Leo Ryan and four others by temple members on a nearby airstrip on Nov. 18, 1978, then with the mass murders and suicides of hundreds, a horror that remains nearly unimaginable 40 years later.

But some lived. Dozens of members in Guyana slipped out of Jonestown or happened to be away that day. Plunged into a new world, those raised in the temple or who joined as teens lost the only life they knew: church, jobs, housing—and most of all, family and friends.

Over four decades, as they have built new lives, they have struggled with grief and the feeling that they were pariahs. Some have come to acknowledge that they helped enable Jim Jones to seize control over people drawn to his interracial church, socialist preaching and religious hucksterism.

With their lives, the story of Jonestown continues, even now.

CHILD OF BERKELEY

Jordan Vilchez's parents were Berkeley progressives in the 1960s—her father African-American, her mother Scotch-Irish. They divorced when Jordan was 6.

When a friend invited her family to Peoples Temple's wine country church, they were impressed by the integrated community. And when her 23-year-old sister joined, Jordan went to live with her at age 12.

"The temple really became my family," she said.

Devotion to its ideals bolstered her self-worth. At 16, she was put on the Planning Commission where the meetings were a strange mix of church business, sex talk—and adulation for Jones. "What we were calling the cause really was Jim," she said.

Instead of finishing high school, Vilchez moved to San Francisco, where she lived in the church. Then, after a 1977 New West magazine expose of temple disciplinary beatings and other abuses, she was sent to Jonestown.

Grueling field work was not to her liking. Neither were the White Nights where everyone stayed up, armed with machetes to fight enemies who never arrived.

Vilchez was dispatched to the Guyanese capital of Georgetown to raise money. On Nov. 18 she was at the temple house when a fanatical Jones aide received a dire radio message from Jonestown. The murders and suicides were unfolding, 150 miles away.

"She gives us the order that we were supposed to kill ourselves," Vilchez recalled.

Within minutes, the aide and her three children lay dead in a bloody bathroom, their throats slit.

For years, Vilchez was ashamed of the part she played in an idealistic group that imploded so terribly. "Everyone participated in it and because of that, it went as far as it did," she said.

Vilchez worked as office manager at a private crime lab for 20 years and now, at 61, sells her artwork.

This past year, she returned to long-overgrown Jonestown. Where the machine shop once stood, there was only rusty equipment. And she could only sense the site of the pavilion, the once-vibrant center of Jonestown life where so many died—including her two sisters and two nephews.

"When I left at 21, I left a part of myself there," she said. "I was going back to retrieve that young person and also to say goodbye."

THE JONESES' FIRSTBORN

Though he waved and smiled at Peoples Temple services, seemingly enraptured like the rest, Stephan Gandhi Jones says he always had his doubts.

"This is really crazy," he recalls thinking.

But Stephan was the biological son of Jim and Marceline Jones. And the temple was his life—first in Indiana, later in California.

"So much was attractive and unique that we turned a blind eye on what was wrong," he said, including his father's sexual excesses, drug abuse and rants.

As a San Francisco high school student, he was dispatched to help build Jonestown. It would become a little town where people of all ages and colors raised food and children.

Stephan helped erect a basketball court and form a team. In the days before Ryan's fact-finding mission to the settlement, the players were in Georgetown for a tourney with the Guyana national teams.

Rebelling, they refused Jones' order to come back. Stephan believed he was too cowardly to follow through with the oft-threatened "revolutionary suicide."

But after temple gunmen killed the congressman, three newsmen and a church defector on the Port Kaituma airstrip, Jones ordered a poisoned grape-flavored drink administered to children first. That way no one else would want to live.

Stephan Jones and some other team members believe they might have changed history if they were there. "The reality was we were folks who could be counted on to stand up," he said. "There is no way we would be shooting at the airstrip. That's what triggered it."

He went through years of nightmares, mourning and shame. To cope, he says he abused drugs and exercised obsessively. "I focused my rage on Dad and his circle, rather than deal with me," he said.

More than 300 Jonestown victims were children. Now, Stephan Jones is father of three daughters, ages 16, 25 and 29, and works in the office furniture installation business.

He says his daughters have seen him gnash his teeth when he talks about his father, but they also have heard him speak lovingly of the man who taught him compassion and other virtues.

"People ask, 'How can you ever be proud of your father?'" he said. "I just have to love him and forgive him."

NINTH-GRADER FROM FRESNO

Eugene Smith recalls how his mother, a churchgoing African-American, bought into Jim Jones' dream after they attended a service in Fresno. She gave her house to the Peoples Temple and they moved to San Francisco.

He was 18 and running a temple construction crew when the church sanctioned his marriage to a talented 16-year-old singer, Ollie Wideman. After Ollie became pregnant, she was sent to Jonestown; Eugene remained behind.

When Smith reunited with his mother and wife in Jonestown, Ollie was 8½ months pregnant.

The reunion with Jones was not as joyous. Jones berated three other new arrivals for misbehavior on the trip; they were beaten and forced to work 24 hours straight.

"He made a promise—once we get to Jonestown there is no corporal punishment," Smith said. "In an hour, that promise was broken."

Life became more tolerable after the couple's baby, Martin Luther Smith, was born. Ollie worked in the nursery, and Eugene felled trees. But he said his discontent festered.

When he was ordered to Georgetown to help with supply shipments, Smith said he concocted an escape plan: Ollie and other temple singers and dancers, he believed, would soon be sent to Georgetown to perform, and the family would flee to the U.S. Embassy.

But the entertainers stayed in Jonestown to entertain Ryan. And Smith's wife, son and mother died.

"All I could do is weep," he said.

After more than 22 years at California's transportation department, Smith retired in 2015. He's 61 now. He's never remarried, and Martin Luther Smith was his only child.

BORN INTO TEMPLE FAMILY

When John Cobb was born in 1960 in a black section of Indianapolis, his mother and older siblings already were temple members. But in 1973, John's oldest brother and a sister, along with six other California college students, quit the church and became its enemies. When the prodigals visited, the Cobbs kept it secret from Jones.

John was attending a San Francisco high school when he was allowed to join his best friends in Jonestown. There, as part of Jones' personal security detail, Cobb saw the once captivating minister strung out on drugs, afraid to venture anywhere for fear of his legal problems.

"If anything, we felt pity for him," he said, "and it grew into a dislike, maybe hate."

He too was a member of the basketball team. His biggest regrets revolve around the team's refusal to return to Jonestown. "I believe 100 percent that not everyone would have been dead," he said.

Cobb lost 11 relatives that day, including his mother, youngest brother and four sisters.

Now 58, he owns a modular office furniture business in the East Bay and is married with a daughter. 29. One day, when she was in high school, she came home and told her parents that her religion class had discussed Peoples Temple; only then did her father share the story of how his family was nearly wiped out.

She wept.

Environment

Ominous US climate report offers few policy solutions

By ERIC ROSTON
BLOOMBERG NEWS

TNS
Bryan Nguyen walks a scorched trail in Liberty Canyon on November 12, 2018, to see the damage caused by the Woolsey fire, in Agoura Hills, Calif.

NEW YORK—A landmark U.S. climate change study by 13 federal agencies brings greater urgency to the question of what Americans can do to avoid an unprecedented shift in how they live in coming decades. What it doesn't do is provide any answers.

"The report does not make policy recommendations, but it is abundantly clear that there are strong policy implications," said Andrew Light, a co-author and a senior fellow at the World Resources Institute. "Every single one of them is, unfortunately, not something that the U.S. is pursuing at the national level."

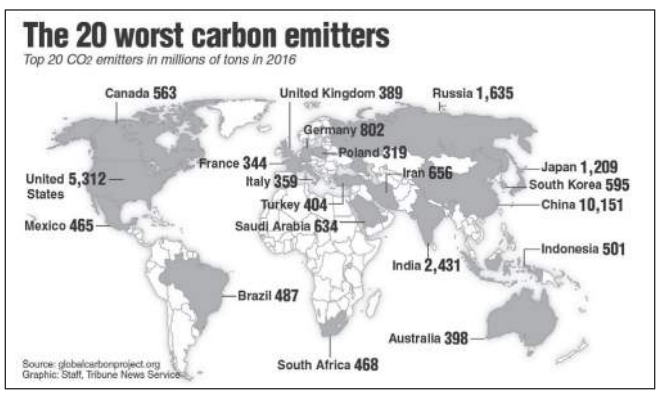
The National Climate Assessment catalogs the environmental and projected financial damage from a climate that's broken free from 12,000 years of relative stability. It looks forward to 2090, when even in a lower-carbon projection the added cost to American society will be more than $100 billion in 2015 dollars, and maybe as much as $200 billion — annually. And that's a best case scenario.

Unstated in the report is that the U.S. government, like most around the globe, isn't doing enough to slow a planetary march toward the cliff's edge. The Trump administration has dismissed without evidence the scientific consensus that humans are responsible for global warming, and moved instead to roll back existing initiatives to slow pollution — to the benefit of fossil fuel interests.

Widely accused of trying to bury the NCA report by releasing it on Black Friday, a traditionally busy day for Americans focused on family gatherings and shopping, the White House has since sought to downplay the congressionally mandated report.

In recent years, thousands of Americans have died during, or as a consequence of, extreme weather tied to climate change — from powerful hurricanes fueled by extremely warm seas to calamitous conflagrations stemming in part from drought. Evidence assembled by climate scientists suggests that such phenomena will get worse as the global temperature continues to rise.

The NCA addressed the practical effects of climate change on everyday Americans. It assessed a range of rising prices, from household expenses to the availability and pricing of food, energy and other goods. Additional emphasis was placed on how



U.S. reliance on other nations will cause it to suffer their climate consequences as well.

"The impacts of climate change, variability, and extreme events outside the U.S. are affecting and are virtually certain to increasingly affect U.S. trade and economy — including import and export prices and businesses with overseas operations and supply chains," the authors write.

When it comes to offering solutions, however, the report is silent. The authors describe the benefits of avoiding worst-case scenarios, called mitigation, without suggesting which specific policies would achieve them. They suggest technological and behavioral changes that lead to significantly lower emissions can cut potential financial damage by half, but fail to offer up one as the best course of action. Unfortunately, it was outside the NCA's remit to specify policies to pursue, or which existing, or yet-to-exist technologies, could work in time.

Ominously, even if a better scenario were to occur by 2090, it would still leave Americans in a country where the government, and thus taxpayers, pay hundreds of billions of dollars more annually to address the fallout of accelerating climate change.

A scenario with dramatically less pollution could slash projected losses by 48 percent ($75 billion) a year in labor costs, 58 percent ($80 billion) in heat-related deaths and 22 percent ($25 billion) in coastal real estate, according to the report. But that still leaves a 12-figure taxpayer burden every year. As far as money to build such solutions is concerned, current-day America faces a $21 trillion national debt fueled by corporate tax cuts, rising healthcare costs, defense spending and Social Security.

But Andrew Light of WRI said many options to address climate change already exist, and that spending on such technologies should be seen as an investment that will be recouped. The opportunities are real and there's money to be made, he said.

"The old days … when acting on climate change was all pain and no gain — are done," Light said.

When the first version of the NCA came out in 2000, researchers were still thinking through how different parts of the U.S. might be vulnerable to natural and human-driven changes. Almost two decades later, the latest assessment incorporates a grim accounting of actual damages, and the tremendous financial implications for individuals, companies, government operations and national defense.

"A lot has happened in 20 years," said John Furlow, a contributing author and deputy director of Columbia University's International Research Institute for Climate and Society. "Now it's seen much more as a societal or economic issue."

One critical focus of the new study was agriculture. The sector directly contributed $136.7 billion and 2.6 million jobs to the U.S. economy in 2015. It's also a significant source of pollution — about 9 percent of the U.S. total in 2016 — and vulnerable to its impacts both at home and from abroad. The damage predicted for U.S. food availability and pricing in the coming decades is significant.

145 pilot whales die in stranding on New Zealand beach

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — All of the 145 pilot whales that stranded themselves on a remote New Zealand beach have died.

However, conservation workers are hoping to save some of the eight pygmy killer whales that remained stranded Monday at the other end of the country in an unrelated event.

A hiker discovered the pilot whales in two pods about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) apart late Saturday on Stewart Island. About 75 were already dead and conservation workers decided to euthanize the others due to their poor condition and remote location.

Only about 375 people live on Stewart Island, which is also called Rakiura. The whales were found at Mason's Bay about 35 kilometers (22 miles) from the main township of Oban.

"You feel for the animals, it's just a really sad event," said Ren Leppens, the Rakiura operations manager for the Department of Conservation. "It's the kind of thing you don't want to see. You wish you could understand the reasoning why the whales strand better, so you could intervene."

Leppens said the whales were half buried in sand and not in good health, indicating they had been there for perhaps a day before they were found. He said staff shot the whales and the carcasses would be left where they were for nature to take its course.

Meanwhile, on Sunday, 10 pygmy killer whales were found stranded at Ninety Mile Beach on the North Island. Two have since died, and staff plan to try and refloat the remaining eight.

Whale strandings are relatively common in New Zealand during the Southern Hemisphere spring and summer. It's believed strandings can be caused by a number of factors, such as the whales trying to escape predators, falling ill, or navigating incorrectly.

Catastrophic Northern California fire is finally contained

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A massive wildfire that killed dozens of people and destroyed thousands of homes in Northern California has been fully contained after burning for more than two weeks, authorities said Sunday.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said the Camp fire had been surrounded by firefighters following several days of rain in and around the devastated town of Paradise.

The nation's deadliest wildfire in a century killed at least 85 people, and 249 are on a list of those unaccounted for. The number of missing dropped in recent days as officials confirmed that more people were alive.

Crews continued sifting through debris and ash for human remains.

"It's certainly good to be done with the containment of this fire, even though there's still a lot of work to be done moving forward," fire spokeswoman Jennifer Erickson said.

The blaze began on Nov. 8 in the parched Sierra Nevada foothills and quickly spread across 240 square miles (620 square kilometers), destroying most of Paradise in a day.

Nearly 19,000 buildings, most of them homes, are gone.

The firefight got a boost last week from the first significant winter storm to hit California. It dropped an estimated 7 inches (18 centimeters) of rain over the burn area during a three-day period without causing significant mudslides, said Hannah Chandler-Cooley of the National Weather Service.

In Southern California, more residents returned to areas evacuated in a destructive fire as crews repaired power, telephone and gas utilities.

Los Angeles County sheriff's officials said they were in the last phase of repopulating Malibu and unincorporated areas of the county. At the height of the fire, 250,000 fled their homes. The fire was fully contained Nov. 21 after burning for two weeks.

Three people died, and 1,643 buildings, most of them homes, were destroyed, officials said.

Life & Style

200 years of 'Silent Night': Singers mark carol's birthday

NEW YORK (AP) — One of the most famous songs of Christmas was celebrated Tuesday as it approaches its 200th anniversary, with a concert at the New York City church where "Silent Night" is believed to have been sung in the United States for the first time and where a priest was the first to publish an English translation of the Austrian carol.

The performance of the carol by Austria's Kroll Family Singers and ensembles from Trinity Church took place at the Alexander Hamilton memorial in the Trinity churchyard. The singers stood in front of the memorial in the darkened yard as onlookers gathered and horns from passing cars beeped on nearby streets.

AP
The Kroell Family Singers, Gerlinde, left, Elisabeth, center, and Christiane, sing Christmas Carols during a celebration of the song "Silent Night," at Trinity Church, Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2018, in New York.

The Kroll singers opened the carol with verses in the original German, followed by the Trinity singers with verses in languages including French, Spanish, and finally English. After the outdoor performance, they went inside the church, where the Austrian group sang some other songs before they finished with another rendition of "Silent Night."

The song resonates with people because of its simple melody and straightforward message, said Elisabeth Frontull, a member of the Kroll group.

"You sing it from the bottom of your heart; that's the reason why the song is so popular," she said.

Organizers of the event said it's believed the song was first sung at the Trinity Church location in 1839 by the Rainer family singers, a traveling singing group from Austria.

"Silent Night" initially debuted as a musical piece in December 1818, with words by Joseph Mohr, a priest, and music by Franz Xaver Gruber, in Oberndorf, Austria.

In 1859, a priest at Trinity, John Freeman Young, published the first English translation of three verses of the carol, including the well-known first verse that ends with "sleep in heavenly peace."

It has become one of the most recorded songs in the world and declared as part of Austria's cultural heritage.

To mark its anniversary, Austrian tourism organizations put together a number of events in that country, including concert and exhibitions.

'SpongeBob' creator Stephen Hillenburg dies at 57

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Stephen Hillenburg, who used his dual loves of drawing and marine biology to spawn the absurd undersea world of "SpongeBob SquarePants," has died, Nickelodeon announced Tuesday.

Hillenburg died Monday of Lou Gehrig's disease, also known as ALS, the cable network said in a statement. He was 57.

He had announced he had the disease in March 2017. His death comes just weeks after the passing of another cartoon hero in Marvel creator Stan Lee.

Hillenburg conceived, wrote, produced and directed the animated series that began in 1999 and bloomed into hundreds of episodes, movies and a Broadway show.

The eternally, obliviously jolly SpongeBob and his yell-along theme song that opened "Who lives in a pineapple under the sea?!" quickly appealed to college kids and parents as much as it did kids.

Hillenburg

"The essence of the show is that SpongeBob is an innocent in a world of jaded characters," Hillenburg told The Associated Press in 2001. "The rest is absurd packaging."

Its vast cast of oceanic creatures included SpongeBob's starfish sidekick Patrick, his tightwad boss Mr. Krabs, and his always-exasperated neighbor Squidward Tentacles.

Hillenburg's undersea world of Bikini Bottom was a realm like no other, real or fictional. SpongeBob can play his nose like a flute and could not possibly be happier to work his fast-seafood job of flipping Krabby Patties.

But he has his troubles, too. He constantly fails his boat-driving test, forcing his frightened blowfish teacher to inflate. In one episode he suffers a broken butt and is afraid to leave his pineapple home for days.

"I don't want to face my fears," SpongeBob, voiced by Tom Kenny, says in another episode. "I'm afraid of them!"

Kenny presented Hillenburg with a special honor at the Daytime Emmy Awards in April, and said in his speech that Hillenburg himself is the embodiment of his main character.

Stevie Wonder announces plan to help California fire victims

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Stevie Wonder wants to raise money through his benefit concert for California fire victims impacted by the catastrophic wildfires.

The R&B legend announced his plan Tuesday to also help firefighters and first responders who assisted with the fires through his 22nd annual House Full of Toys Benefit Concert on Dec. 9. The charity billed as "The Stevie Wonder Song Party: A Celebration of Life, Love & Music" will be held at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

Concertgoers are being asked to bring an unwrapped toy or other gift.

"We have to do our best to raise money for those that have been so less fortunate, for those that have lost dreams, lost their homes," he said. "I am very happy to do this again this year but very, very, very excited to do something to help those in a bigger sense the less fortunate."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Zimmern apologizes for comments about Chinese restaurants

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—"Bizarre Foods " host Andrew Zimmern is apologizing for his comments about Chinese restaurants after he was criticized as culturally insensitive. Zimmern just opened his own Chinese restaurant, Lucky Cricket, in Minnesota. Last week, Fast Company posted an interview from the summer in which Zimmern says he was saving the souls of people who dine at "(expletive) restaurants masquerading as Chinese food" in the Midwest. The Eater said his remarks represented cultural elitism. An op-ed in The Washington Post called them insulting. In a statement to the Star Tribune , Zimmern admits his comments sounded arrogant. He took responsibility and attempted to clarify, saying many diners in the Twin Cities area eat Chinese food in malls, and he hopes to expose them to the "greatness of Chinese and Chinese-American cuisines."

National Board of Review names 'Green Book' year's best film

NEW YORK (AP)—The National Board of Review has named the feel-good road-trip drama "Green Book" the best film of the year, and its star, Viggo Mortensen, best actor. The awards announced Thursday gave "Green Book" a much-needed jolt. The film was declared an Oscar favorite after taking the audience award at the Toronto International Film Festival, but it has struggled to latch on at the box office. "A Star Is Born" also took several top awards, including best director for Bradley Cooper, best actress for Lady Gaga and best supporting actor for Sam Elliott. Barry Jenkins' James Baldwin adaptation "If Beale Street Could Talk" took prizes for Jenkins' screenplay and for Regina King's supporting performance. The awards will be handed out in a gala in New York on Jan. 8.

Mother-in-law pleads for more modesty while breastfeeding

DEAR ABBY: My daughter-in-law insists on not covering my granddaughter while she's breastfeeding in public and allows the baby to nurse with her breast partially exposed (although the nipple is not visible). I'm concerned this may have affected my son's employment because she did it at a company-sponsored event, and he was let go a month afterward. His employers told him he "wasn't fitting in."

How can I get across to her that although the public breastfeeding movement is growing, it still isn't acceptable everywhere, and she should exercise her judgment based on the situation?

DISCREET IN THE EAST

DEAR DISCREET: You are correct that breastfeeding in public is gaining acceptance. There is nothing wrong with it. While you might mention your concerns to her, allow me to point out that there may have been other reasons your son was let go from his job. And one of them may have been that, indeed, he—not she—didn't fit in.

DEAR ABBY: I recently moved in with my older sister, and so far, things have been great. I have met all her friends, and we have hit it off quite well.

When I meet her guy friends, they always comment on how beautiful she is and how they really like her. But then they'll add a little side note about how "cute" I am. I don't like being called cute while they call her beautiful. Am I crazy to be mad over this? Should I bring it up with her or let it all blow over?

CUTE SISTER

DEAR CUTE SISTER: There's nothing your sister can do to muzzle her male friends who probably think they're paying you a compliment. I can't see anything to be gained by bringing this to her attention because she's blameless.

Because you feel you are being damned with faint praise, being told you are cute while they describe her as beautiful, the thing to do would be to tell them "humorously" they need to work on some new material.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I were married a year ago. I personally designed and filled out the invitations and thank-you cards. About two months after our wedding, I asked my husband to mail the thank-you cards for me.

Today, I went into a seldom-used closet and discovered a box containing all of the unsent cards! I'm embarrassed to mail them out since they are a year late, but at the same time, I put a lot of time and effort into those cards. Should I send them now? And if so, how can I apologize for their tardiness since they are already sealed and stamped?

NEWLYWED-ISH IN CONNECTICUT

DEAR NEWLYWED-ISH: It is never too late to say thank you. Put the thank-yous in the mail, send a group email to those guests whose email addresses you have and call the remaining ones to explain what happened and apologize. These things sometimes happen, and if your friends and relatives are nice people, they will graciously accept your apology.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

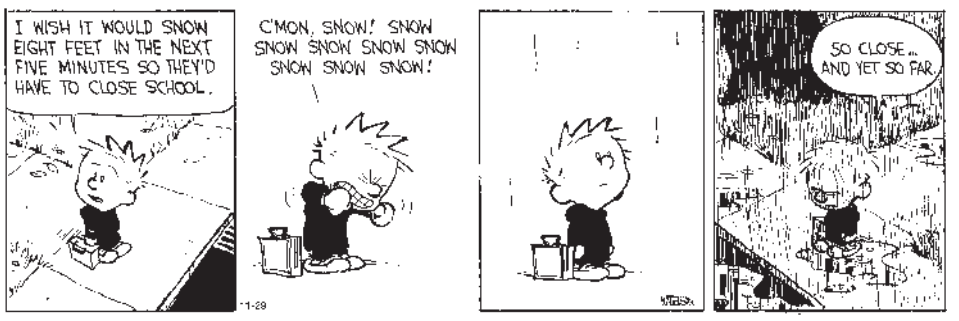
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

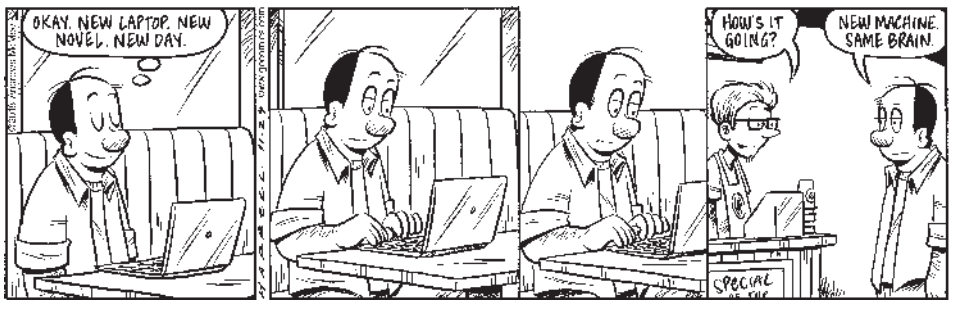

I WISH IT WOULD SNOW EIGHT FEET IN THE NEXT FIVE MINUTES SO THEY'D HAVE TO CLOSE SCHOOL.
C'MON, SNOW! SNOW SNOW SNOW SNOW SNOW SNOW SNOW!
SO CLOSE... AND YET SO FAR.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

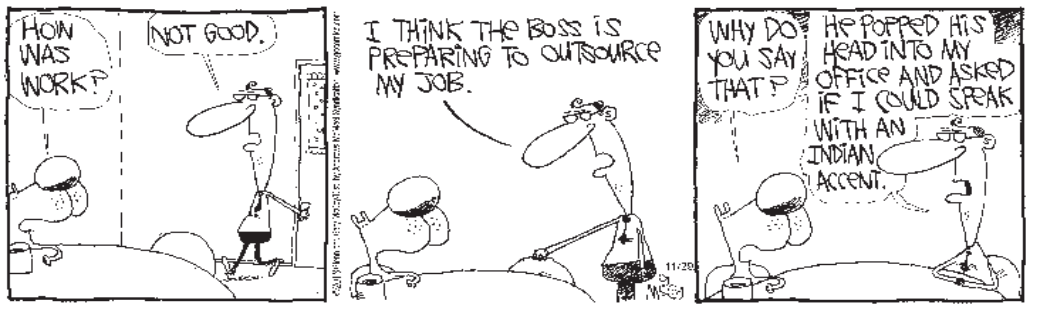
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


HOW WAS WORK?
NOT GOOD.
I THINK THE BOSS IS PREPARING TO OUTSOURCE MY JOB.
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
HE POPPED HIS HEAD INTO MY OFFICE AND ASKED IF I COULD SPEAK WITH AN INDIAN ACCENT.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

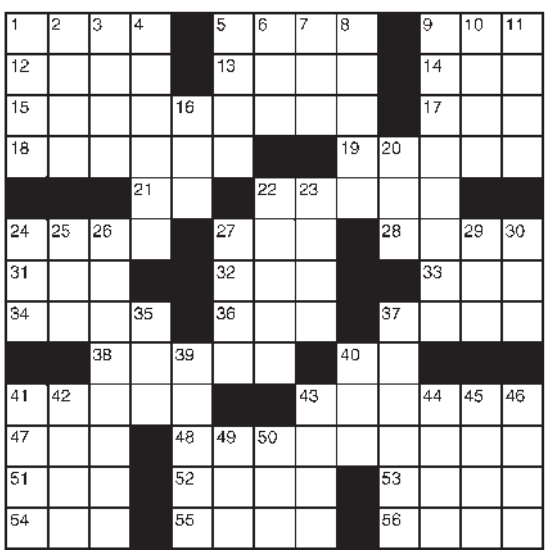
ACROSS
1 Remain
5 Rope fiber
9 Feedbag morsel
12 Toy block name
13 Author Quindlen
14 "Alice" waitress
15 Starch-yielding plant
17 Little lie
18 Cracker type
19 Irritable
21 Symbol of strength
22 Dickens' Heep
24 Karate school
27 Away from WSW
28 Pyramid, maybe
31 Glamorous Gardner
32 201, in old Rome
33 Tic-tac-toe win
34 PC alternatives
36 Scamper
37 Harrow rival
38 Out of order
40 "That's a laugh!"
41 Cellist Casals
43 Derby prizes
47 2016 Olympics city
48 "Sundown" singer Gordon
51 Commotion
52 Elbow counterpart
53 Forearm bone
54 Wrestling surface
55 From the start
56 For fear that

DOWN
1 Dross
2 Region (Abbr.)
3 Taj Mahal city
4 Attention-getting call
5 Injure
6 Rock's Brian
7 6 on a phone
8 Singer LaBelle
9 Branch
10 Landed
11 Country singer Keith
16 Letter sealer
20 Chow down
22 Full-length, like a film
23 Check
24 Weir
25 Lab eggs
26 Soldier's footwear
27 Beige
29 Cow's comment
30 "— voyage!"
35 Bando of baseball
37 Juicy bit of gossip
39 Gdansk dance
40 Grass shack
41 Baby carriage
42 Opera set in Egypt
43 "Close one!"
44 Only
45 Billions of years
46 RBI, for one
49 Hostel
50 "Gosh!"

Solution time: 24 mins.

S	T	E	M		B	R	A		A	F	E	W
I	S	T	O		C	O	N		L	A	V	A
Γ	A	R	M	H	A	N	D		G	R	I	N
T	R	E	M	O	R		S	T	I	F	L	E
			A	A	H		C	R	E	L		
A	R	F		R	J	N		A	R	U	B	A
H	E	A	T		G	I	N		S	N	O	B
A	C	P	I	D		P	E	I		G	A	S
		T	R	I	B		U	M	S			
E	T	H	A	N	E		T	A	K	I	N	G
A	R	I	D		F	A	C	I	C	A		
Π	U	N	E		O	V	A		F	E	M	A
Γ	E	G	S		G	E	L		F	R	E	D

Yesterday's answer 11-29



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Anna Faris, 42; Don Cheadle, 54; Andrew McCarthy, 56; Howie Mandel, 63.

Happy Birthday: Keep your emotions in check this year. Someone will take advantage of your vulnerability if you are too open about the way you feel or what you plan to do. Secrets must be kept, and poor habits eradicated. Living within your means and by the rules and regulations set by authority figures will be necessary. Emotional manipulation is apparent. Your numbers are 3, 14, 25, 29, 32, 38, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Money, legal and medical issues may be misleading or cause uncertainty. Don't leave anything to chance, and handle such matters personally. An impulsive purchase will disappoint you. Ask for a second opinion before you make a physical change to your appearance. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Get in touch with an old friend or reconnect with people you worked with in the past. The information you receive will help point you in a direction that allows you to use your skills in new ways. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Do things right the first time. Paying close attention to details and following instructions will help you save time and money. A change to the way you look or what you do will turn out better than anticipated. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* You don't have to look for an excuse to make a change. It's OK to be different and to do your own thing. Take care of your responsibilities personally. Someone unique will offer an interesting point of view. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Too much of anything will set you back. Distance yourself from anyone who tends to be indulgent or pushes you to take part in things you can't afford or don't want to do. Use your wisdom to get your way. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* If you share your feelings, someone will overreact or misinterpret what you have to say. Be a good listener; you will discover a good way to introduce what you would like to see happen. Truth and loyalty are essential. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Listen and learn. Look for alternative ways to make personal changes that will lower your overhead and ease your stress. Talking to an expert will give you some ideas that will help you bring in more cash. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Get together with people you know you can trust. Someone from your past will create a problem for you if you let him or her back into your life. Stick to what works, and don't feel you owe anyone anything. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* The less information you offer others, the better. Someone will misinterpret what you say or offer you false information. Stay focused on your chores and responsibilities, and leave nothing to chance if you want to avoid having to backtrack. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* An emotional situation will arise if an old debt isn't paid off. Joint ventures should not be trusted. You are best to handle negotiations personally. Don't let an unexpected change someone makes throw you off guard. Protect your assets. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Sum up what you'd like to be doing, and head in that direction. Refuse to let someone deter you from following your heart and doing what you enjoy doing most. Open communication will help ward off problems later on. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Arguments will be a waste of time. You'll end up in a stalemate that can damage a relationship you have with a good friend or relative. Don't take a risk -- emotionally or financially. Patience will be required. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are self-assured, fun-loving and sensitive. You are creative and unique.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		2	4					
	6	4	2	3				
3	9		1					
8	1	3						
	5						4	
						6	5	3
					1		7	8
				2	5	4	6	
					7	2		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/29

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

3	5	1	4	6	9	8	7	2
2	7	6	1	5	8	3	4	9
4	8	9	2	7	3	6	1	5
9	6	4	3	1	7	5	2	8
7	2	5	9	8	4	1	6	3
1	3	8	5	2	6	4	9	7
5	9	2	8	4	1	7	3	6
8	4	7	6	3	2	9	5	1
6	1	3	7	9	5	2	8	4

Pit Tally Level ★★★ 11/29

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

JOSS & MAIN Solution: 7 letters

C	L	T	T	S	T	O	R	A	G	E	B	M	F	O
U	S	O	N	O	E	C	L	O	C	K	S	I	L	I
S	C	E	U	E	W	P	Ⓢ	Ⓖ	Ⓤ	Ⓡ	E	R	O	T
H	O	T	R	N	C	E	A	E	E	X	E	R	R	A
I	N	N	A	V	G	C	L	R	D	U	R	O	A	P
O	C	A	S	M	E	E	A	S	D	A	T	R	L	I
N	E	D	P	D	R	W	P	S	C	F	O	A	S	L
S	S	N	M	S	T	O	A	K	U	C	N	D	I	L
L	L	E	A	A	T	L	O	R	E	T	E	N	G	O
I	W	P	L	E	L	E	N	D	E	B	I	N	S	W
S	O	F	L	E	V	I	K	R	W	O	R	H	T	S
N	B	B	R	A	T	S	S	S	G	A	L	F	E	M
E	A	B	S	U	T	W	R	E	A	T	H	S	E	O
T	M	E	R	A	S	D	N	I	L	B	A	T	H	O
U	S	E	M	A	R	F	I	R	E	P	I	T	S	R

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Accent, Baskets, Bath, Beds, Bins, Blinds, Bowls, Clocks, Cushions, Décor, Doormat, Drapes, Faux, Fire Pits, Flags, Flatware, Florals, Frames, Furniture, Lamps, Lounge, Mats, Mirror, Patio, Pendant, Pillows, Planters, Rack, Rooms, Rugs, Sconces, Serveware, Sheets, Storage, Tabletop, Throw, Towels, Trees, Umbrellas, Utensils, Vases, Wreaths

Yesterday's Answer: Flipping

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Nuggets roll to biggest victory against Lakers

DENVER (AP)—The Denver Nuggets have never been better against the Lakers.

Paul Millsap, Jamal Murray and Malik Beasley scored 20 points apiece, and the Nuggets rolled to their most lopsided victory ever over Los Angeles, a 117-85 rout on Tuesday night.

The 32-point margin surpassed a 29-point win in 1993.

"I thought we came out and just took it to them," Millsap said. "Our halfcourt defense was tremendous. We were not allowing them to get any shots. We could have done a little better job of shutting them down in the paint but overall I think we did a really good job of coming in and establishing what we wanted to do, paying attention to the game plan. And it completely took them out of their game."

Nikola Jokic added 14 points and Juancho Hernangomez had 12 for the Nuggets, who won their fourth in a row.

Kyle Kuzma scored 21 points for Los Angeles, while LeBron James and Brandon Ingram added 14 apiece.

The Lakers, who handed the Nuggets their first loss of the season in late October in Los Angeles, struggled to find their shooting touch against Denver's defensive pressure.

The Lakers were outshot 48.5 percent to 39.5 percent and finished just 5 of 35 (14.3 percent) from 3-point range. And for the 10th time this season, the Nuggets held an opponent to under 100 points.

"I've thought we were a defensive team in my head for a while now but this year it is our identity," Nuggets coach Michael Malone said. "It speaks to the buy-in and commitment and the fact that our guys realize that regardless of the offense, when we defend, we are a team that can beat anyone. We have done that against really good teams and really good players. Tonight was another example of that."

Up by eight at the half, the Nuggets stretched their lead to 89-71 with a strong third quarter. Jokic started the Nuggets' third by hitting a pair of 3s and Mason Plumlee's tip-in just before the quarter ended put Denver in front by 18 points going into the fourth quarter.

The Nuggets kept the pressure on in the final period, outscoring the Lakers down the stretch 28-14.

"We stayed in it as much as we could, stopped the dam from running over," James said. "At one point it broke open because we couldn't make shots."

AP

Denver Nuggets forward Trey Lyles, center, drives between Los Angeles Lakers center Moritz Wagner, left, and guard Sviatoslav Mykhailiuk during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2018, in Denver. The Nuggets won, 117-85.

Pacers 109, Suns 104

In Phoenix, a night after their biggest road blowout victory in 22 years, the Indiana Pacers had to go down to the wire against the Phoenix Suns.

Long-range shooting touch pulled the Pacers through.

Bojan Bogdanovic sank the go-ahead 3-pointer with 31 seconds to play and the Pacers escaped with a over the Suns.

The Pacers, coming off 121-88 victory at Utah the previous night, had their hands full in a tight fourth quarter against a 4-15 Suns team.

"That wasn't pretty at all," Indiana coach Nate McMillan said. "We weren't sharp in this game but you got to find ways to win games like that."

Myles Turner's 3 gave Indiana a 104-101 lead with 48 seconds to play, but Devin Booker responded with a 3-pointer to tie it at 104-104 with 45 seconds left.

After Bogdanovic's long-range basket, Booker's attempt at a game-tying 3 barely rimmed out. Darren Collison's two free throws wrapped up the scoring.

Raptors 122, Grizzlies 114

In Memphis, the Toronto Raptors were teetering on the edge of their winning streak ending, facing a 17-point, second-half deficit.

A 3-point shooting show erased any worries.

The Raptors converted 10 of 17 shots from outside the arc in the second half, including 7 of 12 in the fourth to pull away from the Memphis Grizzlies.

"We had a real gut check at halftime there," Raptors coach Nick Nurse said after Toronto trailed 71-59 at the break. "We weren't really doing the things that we wanted to do, and then we came out and played a lot better in the second half."

Kyle Lowry had 24 points and six assists, and Fred VanVleet added 18 points to lead the Raptors. VanVleet made all six shots on the night, including three from outside the arc in the fourth.

"We know I haven't been shooting the ball well," VanVleet said. "That's no secret. So, to get back on track a little bit is always fun."

Kawhi Leonard finished with 17 points and 10 rebounds, and Serge Ibaka scored 16 points as the Raptors won their sixth straight and maintained the best record in the NBA (18-4).

Pistons 115, Knicks 108

In Detroit, there's plenty of mediocrity in the Eastern Conference this season, and the Detroit Pistons are taking advantage.

Blake Griffin scored 30 points and Stanley Johnson added 21 to lift the Pistons to a victory over the New York Knicks.

Reggie Jackson contributed 21 points for Detroit. The Pistons held New York to 40 percent shooting from the field and led throughout the final three quarters.

The Pistons (11-7) are off to a solid start under new coach Dwane Casey. Nine of their victories—including Tuesday's—have been against teams that currently have losing records, but they all count.

"We have to prove to our fans who we are and what we are, and make sure they are trusting to spend their hard-earned money," Casey said after another game in front of a sparse crowd in Detroit.

Hawks 115, Heat 113

In Miami, Josh Richardson took the last pass from Dwyane Wade, then wound up taking a wide-open 3-pointer that would have been a game-winner.

Like everything else this season for Miami, the last shot didn't go according to plan.

Richardson's shot bounced off the front of the rim with less than 2 seconds remaining, time ran out on the Heat and the Atlanta Hawks—who wasted every bit of a 19-point, second-half lead—escaped with the win.

"Just kind of went our way," Hawks coach Lloyd Pierce said after his team snapped a seven-game road slide. "But we'll take it."

Top 50 in the world for Masters invitations getting tight

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP)—A year ago, Brandt Snedeker made a last-ditch effort to secure a spot in the Masters by flying halfway around the world to play in the Indonesia Masters with hopes of getting into the Top 50 by the end of the year.

He withdrew after a 72, ended the year at No. 59 and wound up missing the Masters for the first time since 2010.

That won't be a problem this year because Snedeker won the Wyndham Championship. Charles Howell III won't be consumed about getting back to the Masters because he won the final PGA Tour event of the year at the RSM Classic.

With only three weeks of golf left around the world, it could be tight for a few others wanting to end the year in the Top 50.

Branden Grace is No. 48 this week and likely to slip a little more. He is expected to play next week in the South African Open, and he currently is on the entry list for the Alfred Dunhill Championship in South Africa.

Matt Wallace, who would appear safe at No. 44, also is on the entry list for the two events in South Africa.

Emiliano Grillo is No. 46 and not scheduled to play, though he also appears to be safe. Ditto for Lucas Bjerregaard of Denmark at No. 47.

If the cutoff for Top 50 were now, 13 players would qualify for Augusta National through the world ranking, a list that includes Ian Poulter at No. 39. Earlier this year, Poulter came up one victory short in the Dell Match Play of getting into the Top 50, and then qualified the next week by winning the Houston Open.

Either way, the Masters would appear to easily meet its goal of keeping the field to under 100 players.

Including 13 players from the Top 50 not already eligible, the field for the Masters is at 79. One spot remains for the Latin American Amateur champion, along with winners of PGA Tour events leading up to the Masters (except those opposite the World Golf Championships) and another top-50 exemption a week before the Masters.

In his final event of his first full year as a pro, Phil Mickelson was runner-up to Tom Lehman in the Casio World Open in Japan and cracked the Top 50 in the world for the first time at No. 47.

Wednesday is the 25-year anniversary, and Mickelson never left the Top 50.

That's 25 straight years — 1,305 consecutive weeks—that he has been among the Top 50 in the world. On that day, Mickelson was one spot behind Fuzzy Zoeller and one spot ahead of Craig Stadler.

The biggest moment for Mickelson might have been the Phoenix Open this year. He didn't play the last two months of 2017 and finished the year at No. 37, and then missed the cut in his 2018 debut at the CareerBuilder Challenge and dropped to No. 49.

The next week, Mickelson tied for fifth in Phoenix and moved to No. 41. Then, he shot 67 in the final round at Pebble Beach to snag a four-way tie for second, moving to No. 35. And then he won in Mexico three weeks later.

Otherwise, he has never come seriously close to falling out of the Top 50, a remarkable run of consistency.

Saints, Rams, and Chiefs repeat as Top 3 in poll

AP
Los Angeles Rams wide receiver Brandin Cooks (12) is tripped up by Kansas City Chiefs free safety Ron Parker, left, during the second half of an NFL football game, Monday, Nov. 19, 2018, in Los Angeles.

NEW YORK (AP) — For the past 2½ months, one thing has been clear in the NFL: Drew Brees and the New Orleans Saints are hard to stop.

The Saints' winning streak reached 10 games with their 31-17 victory over Atlanta on Thanksgiving night.

The Saints will play their second consecutive Thursday night game when they open Week 13 by facing the Dallas Cowboys.

And it's not the least bit surprising that the surging Saints kept the No. 1 spot in the latest AP Pro32 poll. They received all 12 first-place votes and 384 points in balloting Tuesday by media members who regularly cover the NFL.

"Right here, right now, Drew Brees is this year's MVP in a very crowded field of contenders," Newsday's Bob Glauber said. "At almost 40 years old, he's playing perhaps his best football, with 29 touchdown passes and just two interceptions."

The league's other 10-1 team, the Los Angeles Rams, stayed at No. 2 after its bye week. And the Kansas City Chiefs, who also were on a bye last week, remained No. 3.

Tom Brady and the New England Patriots are still No. 4 after disposing of the New York Jets, 27-13.

The only change in the top five was the Chicago Bears, who inched up a spot to No. 5 after topping the Lions 23-16 on Thanksgiving as backup quarterback Chase Daniel threw for 230 yards and two touchdowns in place of the injured Mitchell Trubisky.

The Los Angeles Chargers jumped two places to No. 6 after dominating Arizona 45-10 as Philip Rivers tied the NFL mark for consecutive completions at 25 and the broke record for the most to start a game.

And the Houston Texans, who have won eight in a row after a 0-3 start, remained No. 7 after topping the Tennessee Titans 34-17 on Monday night.

"The surging Texans honored late owner Bob McNair with an eighth consecutive victory behind a powerful ground game and the usual stingy defense," said Ira Kaufman of Fox 13 in Tampa, Florida.

The Pittsburgh Steelers dropped three spots to No. 8 after their 24-17 loss at Denver.

"Big Ben blows the game in Denver," Fox Sports' John Czarnecki said of Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, who threw for 462 yards but had two interceptions and now has 12 for the season.

They will look to rebound Sunday night when they host the Chargers, who are expected to be without running back Melvin Gordon, who sprained the medial collateral ligament in his right knee during the rout of the Cardinals.

The Minnesota Vikings and Seattle Seahawks, who are both in contention for wild-card spots in the NFC, each moved up a spot to Nos. 9 and 10.

Among the teams making the biggest drop was the Cincinnati Bengals, who plummeted five spots to No. 24. They have lost five of six after a 4-1 start and will finish the season without quarterback Andy Dalton, who went on injured reserve with a thumb injury to his throwing hand.

"The record may not show it, but this could very well be the NFL's worst team by year's end," said Alex Marvez of Sirius XM.

Meanwhile, Temarrick Hemingway is the latest tight end to get his shot with the Denver Broncos, who have lost three tight ends to season-ending injuries.

The Broncos (5-6), who visit the Bengals (5-6) this weekend, promoted Hemingway from their practice squad Tuesday when they placed Jeff Heuerman on injured reserve.

Heuerman broke three ribs and bruised a lung in the Broncos' 24-17 win over the Pittsburgh Steelers on Sunday.

Heuerman was in the midst of a breakout season, posting career highs in catches (31) and yards (281) while scoring twice in his fourth NFL season. He's set to become a free agent after this season.

SEAN

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Kaga partnered with the Solomon Islands' Prudence Bird and they moved a step away from reaching the finals after dominating Vanuatu's Sonya David and Lily Tasarofa, 4-0, 4-0. In the semis, Kaga and Bird will take on the pair of Dussere-Valleaux and Umekuni, who ousted New Caledonia's Alice Delboy and Norah Pugibet, 4-0, 4-2.

The duos of Molbaleh and Pritchard-Lolo and Chand and Vanuatu's Desiree Digno will collide in the other Final Four pairing. Chand and Digno marched into the semis after a walkover victory against Vanuatu's Rayline Daniel and Stephanie Nikahi, while Molbaleh and Pritchard-Lolo barged into the Final Four following a 4-1, 4-0 win over New Caledonia's Amandine Mestre and Alizee Tollet.

MLB strikes deal with MGM as legal gambling expands in US

NEW YORK (AP) — MGM Resorts International became Major League Baseball's official gambling partner in the U.S. and Japan, a deal made as the sport tries to ensure more prevalent legal sports betting does not lead to any scandals of the type sparked by illegal wagers in its past.

"Over the past 18 months we've had various senior people in the office involved various aspects of the sports gaming project," baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said at Tuesday's announcement. "I think that we have ensured ourselves on the integrity front by updating our policies, making clear what employees and players can and cannot do on the one hand, and on the other developing clear guidelines for the commercial activity that central baseball, meaning Major League Baseball will engage in and similarly the kind of commercial activities that will be allowed on the club level, as well."

The U.S. Supreme Court in May overturned the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act, which prohibited every state but Nevada from allowing betting on most sporting events.

Baseball was plagued by betting scandals in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the biggest a thrown World Series in 1919 that led to lifetime bans for eight Chicago "Black Sox" players imposed by the first baseball commissioner, Kenesaw Mountain Landis.

Major League Rule 21 specifies "any player, umpire or club or league official or employee, who shall bet any sum whatsoever upon any baseball game in connection with which the bettor has no duty to perform, shall be declared ineligible for one year" and adds the penalty for betting on a game in which the "bettor has a duty to perform, shall be declared permanently ineligible."

That led to the 1989 investigation of then-Cincinnati manager Pete Rose. The probe concluded Rose bet on the Reds to win with illegal bookmakers, and the career hits leader agreed to a lifetime ban.

MLB is considering updated policies that would prohibit employees, including players, from causing bets to be made and from distributing confidential information that could impact betting, a person familiar with the discussions told The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the policies were not final.

MLB also is discussing its prohibition against team owners also owning entities that provide sports betting, a policy in place before the Supreme Court decision, the person said.

Manfred declined to detail the updated policies, which he said were discussed at last week's owners' meeting. He said final revisions were being made.

MGM will become an MLB-authorized gambling operator and will promote itself with teams and on the MLB Network, MLB.com and the MLB At Bat app. Manfred said MGM will have a presence at baseball's top events.

BOOST

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"Being sent to this event meant that we needed to learn and gather as much information as we can to bring back and grow our grassroots program. AFC's definition of grassroots entails all amateur and recreational players in all ages. What that meant to me is that the NMIFA is only going to get busier," he added.

Zapanta and Vargas also attended the grassroots festival at the AFC House where they watched a 4v4 soccer format and the "tribute to unsung heroes" awards presentation.

"It was also nice to see and meet other representatives of AFC member-nations who have similar duties in their home country. At the dinner table, we met John Whittle, who actually had been to Saipan and conducted a coaching course, 10 years ago," the NMIFA executive director said.

As for Vargas, she said that being new to AFC and coming from a small island, it was very helpful to learn from representatives of big countries that have thrived against all odds.

"The conference was catered to the technical side of grassroots development. We discussed several things, but I believe the highlight of the conference stemmed from the constant interaction between the different MAs (member associations). A big chunk of the conference had us discussed the different challenges we faced in terms of grassroots development and what worked or what didn't work when trying to solve the problem," Vargas said.

"Being a small MA, there was nothing much to do for us there but learn, which is the greatest thing ever. Being able to hear the different approaches developed MAs would take to tackle a problem that is very much relevant to us will only further our growth and that's what we're looking to do—grow the program," she added.

Nuggets roll to biggest victory against Lakers

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Sean, Conatsu in semis

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's Sean Lee and Conatsu Kaga are in the semifinals of their respective singles and doubles events in the Vanuatu Junior Regional Championship 2018.

Kaga was undefeated in pool play in Group B to advance to the Final Four of the girls U16 singles, while Lee earned a 3-1 record to finish second in the elimination round in Group A of the boys U16 age group.

The 15-year-old completed the sweep in the preliminary games after winning a pair of matches yesterday at the Korman Tennis Centre in Port Vila. Kaga first whipped Vanuatu's Naomie Sipiti, 4-0, 4-0, and then got a free win over the latter's compatriot, Rayline Daniel, to top her group with a perfect 4-0 mark. Kaga's two other victories were against Fiji's Kajol's Chand last Monday, 4-2, 4-1, and versus Vanuatu's Ajah Pritchard-Lolo last Tuesday, 4-1, 4-2.

With her clean record, the CNMI player and No. 2 seed in the draw, arranged a semis duel against Japan's Rioka Umekuni, who also won all her four matches in Group C. The other Final Four pairing will have No. 1 seed Rosalie Molbaleh of Vanuatu challenging Tahiti's Vaiani Dussere-Valleaux. Molbaleh matched Kaga and Umekuni unbeaten records, while Dussere-Valleaux entered the semis with a 3-1 slate. Both semis games will be played today.

The boys U16 singles semis will also take place today with Lee taking on No. 1 seed Clement Mainguy. The Commonwealth player prevailed in his final two games—versus Fiji's Abbas Jiwanji last Tuesday, 4-0, 4-0, and against New Caledonia's Fabien Paitio of New Caledonia yesterday, 4-0, 4-1—to make up for his loss to Mainguy, 0-4, 1-4. Before bowing to Mainguy, Lee crushed Fiji's Lixin Chen last Monday, 4-0, 4-0.

VANUATU TENNIS/RON ZWIERS

The CNMI's Sean Lee returns to Fiji's Abbas Jiwanji during their boys U16 singles game in the Vanuatu Junior Regional Championship 2018 last Tuesday at the Korman Tennis Centre in Port Vila.

The winner in the Lee-Mainguy semis will face the victor in the all-Vanuatu duel between Zachary Sands and Noah Molbaleh in this Friday's finals.

Lee is also playing in the doubles and he and Fiji's Charles Cornish coasted to the semis round after a walkover win against Vanuatu's Warea Tigona and Robert Yolou. Lee and Cornish will also have their doubles semis match today against the Fiji pair of Chen and Jin Park, who eliminated New Caledonia's Mathieu Monimeau and Tom Pestana, 4-2, 1-4, 5-1. The other Final Four game will have No. 1 Mainguy and Sands battling the Norfolk Island's Sam Cribb and Fiji's Yong Park. Mainguy and Sands automatically moved into the semis after getting a bye in the opener, while Cribb and Yong Park advanced following their 3-4, 4-3, 5-1 triumph over New Caledonia's Fabien Paitio and Jalane Sallaun-Ouillemon.

In the girls U16 doubles,

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Boost to CNMI's grassroots soccer program

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants and resource speakers in the 2nd Asian Football Confederation Grassroots Football Conference 2018 gather for a group photo.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Northern Mariana Islands Football Association's Ruselle Zapanta and Mikky Vargas attended a conference in Malaysia early this month and came back with lots of ideas that would further boosts the CNMI's grassroots program.

They took part in the 2nd Asian Football Confederation Grassroots Football Conference 2018 held from Nov. 13 to 15 in Kuala Lumpur. Zapanta and Vargas met with their counterparts from the 41 other AFC-member nations and learned from experts and resource speakers that included AFC technical director Andy Roxburgh, AFC Grassroots manager Masahiro Sugiyama, and grassroots football specialist Timo Huttunen of Finland.

"It was a great experience being able to attend such a conference. This being my first time since I was filling in for our technical director (Michiteru Mita) and youth committee representative (NMIFA vice president Vickie Izuka), I was looking forward to see if there are new ideas to improve our grassroots program. It was an insightful event, trying to turn other member association's ideas into something that NMIFA could hopefully implement in the near future," Zapanta said.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Northern Mariana Islands Football Association's Ruselle Zapanta, left, and Mikky Vargas pose for a photo during a break in the 2nd Asian Football Confederation Grassroots Football Conference 2018 held early this month in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.